

**STRUCTURAL DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY IN INDIA:  
A RURAL-URBAN COMPARISON OF COMPONENTS,  
CAUSATION, AND CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY**

*by*

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, KANPUR**

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**STRUCTURAL DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY IN INDIA:  
A RURAL-URBAN COMPARISON OF COMPONENTS,  
CAUSATION, AND CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY**

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for the Degree of  
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*By*  
SHIV PRAKASH GUPTA

*to the*  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, KANPUR**

MAY, 1984

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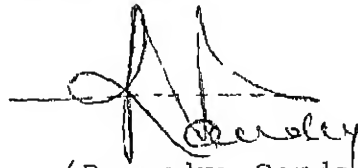
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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis 'STRUCTURAL DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY IN INDIA A RURAL-URBAN COMPARISON OF COMPONENTS, CAUSATION, AND CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY' submitted by Mr Shiv Prakash Gupta in partial fulfilment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, is a record of bonafide research work carried out by him under my supervision and guidance. The results embodied in the thesis have not been submitted to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree or diploma.



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## SYNOPSIS

### STRUCTURAL DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY IN INDIA A RURAL-URBAN COMPARISON OF COMPONENTS, CAUSATION, AND CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Shiv Prakash Gupta to the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, India

#### The Problem

Even after thirty-six years of assiduous effort, the problems of poverty are immense in India. The wisdom of hindsight has now made it abundantly clear that the gap between the poor and the rich has widened. Various estimates of poverty suggest that poverty is more acute in rural than in urban India. However, very little attention has been paid to make a comparative study of the rural-urban poverty. The present inquiry aims at a sociological analysis of the structural dimensions of poverty in terms of its components, causation, and consequences.

#### Objectives of the Study

This study has a three-fold objective (1) to define the components that constitute the vector of poverty in rural and urban India, (2) to analyse the way poverty is generated, and (3) to find out the consequences of poverty.

The components that constitute the vector of poverty are  
Economic Component (1) occupation, and (2) income and assets,  
Basic Need Component (3) food, and (4) shelter, Resource

Component (5) education, and (6) health, and Socio-Cultural Component (7) demographic features, (8) socio-cultural features, and (9) power and politics. Having defined the components of the vector of poverty, attempts have been made to analyse how each component contributes to the making of other components and what are the consequences of each component.

### Hypotheses

Our major hypothesis is that the structural background of the rural and urban areas does make a difference between the poverty in terms of component, causation, and consequences. The specific hypotheses are (1) the rural poor are likely to have less income, assets, and occupational opportunities as compared to the urban poor, (2) the rural poor tend to take less nutritional diet and better shelter than that of their urban counterparts, (3) the urban poor are likely to be at an advantageous position in terms of educational and health facilities as compared to their rural counterpart, (4) the rural poor families are likely to be larger, more conservative, and powerless than that of the urban poor.

### Methodology

The study has an exploratory-cum-descriptive research design. The inquiry has been conducted in Kanpur city and rural areas of Kanpur Nagar district. The selection of the sample has been made through stratified random sampling. The sample constitutes of 20 per cent of the head of the

households from the urban slum localities and villages selected. The final sample consists of 250 urban and 150 rural poor.

Three broad categories of methodology were adopted for the analysis of poverty: (1) quantitative (documentary facts and statistical analysis of the empirical data) and qualitative (interview, case study, and observation) techniques, (2) inductive techniques such as chi-square to identify the dependency and causality, and (3) systems perspective to understand the relationship governing the behaviour of poverty system as a whole.

The important independent variables taken for the study are contextual background, caste, income, occupation, and education.

In order to identify and measure poverty, we also relied on absolute criteria such as income level approach, consumer expenditure approach, energy requirement approach, and basic services approach.

### Summary and Conclusions

The sample consists of high and low castes, different religious groups, poor of different levels, and urban inhabitants, migrants, and rural residents. The study is confined only to a few slum localities of Kanpur city and contiguous villages of Kanpur Nagar district. The findings of the study are, therefore, limited to this section of population. However, the sample has been drawn with an eye to encompass a wider section of the poor population. And with

caution its findings may be extended to similar other population elsewhere

In all nine components constitute the vector of poverty. They are occupation, income and assets, food, shelter, health, education, demographic feature, socio-cultural characteristics, and power and politics. Most vital areas of concern have been focussed and analysed in relation to each component.

The findings of the study reveal that each component contributes to the generation and perpetuation of other components. For instance, poor occupation yields low income & status, which, in turn, results in low accumulation of assets. The poor income, assets, and wage labour force them to choose a diet with low energy-content. The poor food consumption leads to the problems of health. The shortage of proper shelter adds further physical and moral problems. Due to financial hardships, there is less control over resources such as education and health services. Since the main source of the poor's income is wage-labour, it has impact on the family size. The offsprings of the poor prove to be an asset as they supplement the family income by wage earning. So the family size becomes large. The poor nurture the biases against the nonpoor. There is a sub-culture of poverty. The poor suffer from powerlessness economically, politically, and socially. Thus, various components of poverty are so interlinked that they form a system of poverty.

The consequences of poverty are very serious and have far-reaching implications. The income is very meagre. The poor fail to meet the basic human needs such as food,

shelter, and clothing. Poverty blocks them from getting proper treatment. The children of the poor fail to get proper schooling. They find no avenue — political or social — open due to their powerlessness on these fronts. The poor carry the burden of a large family, for, they need more hands to supplement their income. The socio-cultural milieu develops a distinct subculture of the poor.

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P A R T I

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PRELIMINARIES

THE NATURE OF POVERTY

THE DESIGN AND THE SCOPE OF STUDY

THE SETTING

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## CHAPTER ONE

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### INTRODUCTION . THE NATURE OF POVERTY

#### THE PROBLEM.

The present study aims at a sociological analysis of the structural dimensions of poverty in India. Today the elimination of poverty is of overwhelming political importance.

(1973.1-3)

The Planning Commission / , in one of its recent major documents, states that: "removal of poverty and attainment of self-reliance are the two major tasks which the country has set out to accomplish"; "elimination of poverty must, therefore, have the highest priority"; "removal of poverty over a reasonable period of time, thus, constitutes the key aim of the Fifth Plan". Even then the document makes no attempt to analyse the concept of poverty and defines it only in passing in terms of a minimum income of Rs. 20 per capita per month, computed on the basis of unspecified criteria. It is argued here that this and similar other approaches to the question of poverty are inadequate. The study assumes that poverty is a complex phenomenon which is not readily identifiable as a certain number of rupees per month; it rather arises out of the interaction of many different elements. And, for the elimination of poverty, It is necessary to know various components that constitute the vector of poverty and how the system of interrelationships between the components as a whole responds. One of the objectives of the present study is to pay attention to the conceptualization of poverty by discerning its components and relating them with one another.

The main objective of this study is to find out the relationship between social structure and poverty. Such relationships are widely thought to be important. Some consider that changes in the social structure have a positive effect on poverty while others think that they have an adverse effect on it. This study will attempt to suggest which features of social existence, which aspects of social reality, which social factors or which location play a greater role in the generation of poverty. Any policy and programme for the reduction of poverty is likely to be ineffective unless it takes account of a network of relationships through which poverty is generated and perpetuated and of structural components that are present in many of these relationships.

Most of the poverty studies have relied on a single variable approach such as income, calorie-intake, year of schooling, and the like, mostly in physical terms. Such an account remains partial and quantitative. We are of the view that many diverse elements are involved in the causation of poverty — economic, social, political, demographic, cultural, and historical. Here the focus is on the multi-variate nature of poverty. Precisely put, poverty cannot be determined by absolute criteria but it has to <sup>be</sup> understood in terms of relative criteria in the context of society as a whole. An attempt shall be made to isolate some of these issues and to relate them to the causation of poverty. However, in order to understand the relationships between structural features and poverty, it is insufficient merely to analyse the direct effects of one on the other. There are many sources of poverty, and they are

far from independent of each other. The role of specific social structure in the generation of poverty can only be understood within an analysis of the generation of poverty as a whole.

Much of the poverty studies are concerned exclusively either with urban or rural poverty. Part of the conventional wisdom regards poverty prevailing in rural and urban contexts as analytically equivalent. This work challenges this view and assumes that rural and urban poverty substantially differ from each other in terms of composition, generation and intensity. The models and assumptions of either urban or of rural poverty are inappropriate guide for understanding the nature of poverty prevailing in both these contexts and the underestimation of the differences of rural and urban poverty is likely to lead to incorrect conclusions about what factors and policies are likely to influence the level of living of the poor. Our objective is to compare rural and urban poverty.

The studies of the past, by and large, present the perceptions of the poor, by outside observers, which, at times, are value-loaded. This analysis takes into account the perceptions, by the poor, of themselves, of their lives, and of their roles in society. In this manner, the study has tried to shun the belief that the investigator's value judgements are superior to those of the poor.

Before we embark on the empirical aspect of our study, it is necessary to clarify our theoretical position. Therefore, some introductory perspective on poverty is provided in the pages that follow. Our main focus here would be on the

theoretical questions we might keep in mind as we proceed. In so doing an attempt shall be made to gain some appreciation of. (1) conceptualizing poverty; (2) the dimensions of poverty; (3) the types of poverty, (4) ideologies that maintain and perpetuate poverty; (5) theories explaining poverty and inequality; and (6) the issue of abolition of poverty.

### CONCEPTUALIZING POVERTY

The word 'poverty' and its adjectival 'poor' denotes an ancient concept for expressing social differences between man and man. It was coined long before the social sciences came up with the notion of social stratification.

The term 'poverty' is used generally as if its meaning is clear, but this is not the case. Poverty is a vague and value-loaded term, which sounds differently depending upon culture and economic development. Kosa discerns for us four possible attitudes towards poverty: "(1) poverty is taken for granted and its existence is not perceived; (2) poverty is taken for granted and its existence is perceived; (3) poverty is not taken for granted and its existence is perceived; and (4) poverty is not taken for granted, but its existence is not perceived" (Kosa, 1969.8).

In the current literature dealing with social stratification, more precise terms such as the 'lower-class' or the 'blue-collar class' have gained currency but they refer to a different classificatory system which is not interchangeable with "the poor" (Keller, 1966; Shostak and Gomberg, 1964). These words include a definite type of poor but exclude others.

Word-substitution, says Matza, "is consequential, not because the referents of concepts are thereby transformed, but because it is a deception of self and others . . . (and) obscures and ultimately suppresses the underlying theories, especially in value-laden or offensive names" (Matza, 1966.310-39).

Thus some attention has to be paid to the conceptualization of poverty before we proceed

The term 'poverty' refers to "the state or condition of having little or no money, goods, or means of support," (Random, 1969) or "to a condition of being in want of something that is needed, desired, or generally recognized as having value" (Valentine, 1968 12). This implies, then, that there are variable degrees of poverty depending upon different states or conditions of the poor. It is further implicit in it that the essence of poverty is inequality—some concept of deprivation.

The poverty is historical in nature. Hence the meaning of poverty changes in spatiotemporal dimension. The state of being poor in the United States or the United Kingdom is different from being poor in India or Pakistan. Furthermore, poverty in India, which was on the eve of independence, is different from what it is three decades after. Differently expressed, the meaning of poverty not only varies from society to society but it also varies within the same society at different historical points. When it is said that "the poverty is relative to time and space," it implies that what we define as poverty is related to the conditions and possibilities of the society. As a society changes in the quantity and kind of

production and in the prevailing standards of life, the definition of poverty changes too. The standard of living against which deprivation is measured varies considerably and the concept of deprivation is itself not constant across countries. With these cautions let us look at the meaning of poverty.

There is a long tradition of debate as to whether poverty is absolute or relative, whether it is subjective or objective. (Miller and Devey; Wedderburn, 1981). Differently expressed, there are two basic approaches (Fuchs, 1965; Rodgers, 1979; Korpi, 1980 287) to the conceptualization of poverty absolute and relative.

#### Absolute Approach to the Definition of Poverty

There are two versions of absolute definition of poverty: bourgeois and Marxist. The bourgeois theorists try to define poverty in relation to human physiology and in terms of subsistence levels of nutrition. The Marxists treat subsistence minimum more than physiologically determined. They include both natural and necessary wants. Marx said.

"the worker's natural wants, such as food, clothing, fuel and housing vary according to the climatic and other physical conditions of his country. On the other hand, the number and extent of his so-called necessary wants . . . are themselves the product of historical development, and depend, therefore, to a great extent, on the degree of a civilization of a country" (Marx, 1909, I quoted in Baran and Sweezy, 1966 20)

Marxists thus argue that the subsistence minimum varies historically, but at any given time and place it can be identified and approximately measured. Following this line of argument,

Baran and Sweezy define poverty as "the condition in which those members of a society live whose incomes are insufficient to cover what is for that society and at that time the subsistence minimum" (Baran and Sweezy, 1966 281).

Much effort has been made to define poverty line which represent the lower limit of the existence of a population. Among the early studies Rowntree's "primary poverty" could be mentioned.<sup>1</sup> Recently several studies have been conducted to establish the absolute poverty line in both developed countries such as the U.S A. and the U.K. (For the various definitions of poverty in the U.S.A , see Plotnick and Skidmore, 1975. For the U.K., see Coates and Silbum, 1970, Lansley and Smith, 1977; Abel-Smith and Townsend, 1965; Zimbatise, 1977, 419-497) and developing country, especially India (Dandekar and Rath, 1970, Govt. of India, 1949, Bardhan, 1970; Minhas, 1970).

These studies provide mostly economic definitions of poverty. One of the most common elements stressed in the definition of poverty based on subsistence level is the lack or inadequacy of income. According to Dandekar, "Want of adequate income, howsoever defined, is poverty . . . (Dandekar, 1981 1243). Some scholars argue that "Poverty has to be

---

<sup>1</sup>Primary poverty was defined as "families whose total earnings are insufficient to obtain the minimum necessities for the maintenance of merely physical efficiency This, in turn, was based on nutritional standards set by Atwater, a standard diet pattern, and on the opinions of minimum expenditure on other goods. Secondary poverty involved incomes which were sufficient to purchase the minimum necessities, but which were spent in ways such that this minimum was not achieved"(Rowntree, 1908:86).

identified with deficiency in the total level of living which includes not only energy requirements but also balanced diet needed for health, and the other basic needs essential for human existence at a tolerable level" (Rao, 1977 645-654). The poverty line in terms of specific income level varies depending on assumptions as to what constitutes "the daily needs of life" and the cost of these items. Dandekar has mentioned four such criteria for the definition of current poverty line: (1) the proportion of expenditure taken up by specified essential items such as food, (2) calorie value of food; (3) cost of balanced diet; and finally, (4) cost of essentials of tolerable human existence (Dandekar, 1981 1243). Abel-Smith and Townsend define poverty in terms of income limits for social security assistance (Abel-Smith and Townsend, 1965). Some of the more "basic needs" work has been in the same tradition (see, for instance, Khan, 1977, Cortazar, 1977, Szal, 1979). The basic assumption of the poverty line is that there are some absolute criteria to which reference can be made in establishing the "vital minimum." Regardless of where the poverty line is set, it is considered below what is needed to lead full and fruitful life in society.

The subsistence definition appears to be both easy to explain and administer. But its apparent simplicity obscures some major problems. One difficulty crops up due to the meaning of subsistence. The concept of subsistence implies that some things are necessary for human existence and goods and services beyond this level are treated as luxuries. And this represents value judgements about desirable level of

activity and comfort. Secondly, the cost of basic necessities varies widely. Thirdly, a "poverty line" definition has failed to distinguish the different minimal needs of families of different sizes, different stages in the life-cycle, and different geographical location. Another difficulty in using a "poverty line" is that the line is relative to time. This creates the difficulty in comparing the magnitude of poverty of the day with that of the past. The goods or services considered as the necessary minimal are not fixed but increase with the general increase in living standard (Miller, 1968:38).

Furthermore, the definition of poverty line is both arbitrary and capricious (Townsend, 1970; Abel-Smith and Bagley, 1970; Rein, 1968). The main problem is that those who adhere to the subsistence level definition use the wide variety of arbitrary figures to establish the poverty level. Its one consequence is that estimates of the extent of poverty varies from author to author (Harrington, 1962, Myrdal, 1965, 1976:98-99). Finally, those who favour a subsistence definition of poverty exhibit great optimism about the speed of change. It masks the reality and enables people to believe that no one starves in affluent society and that real poverty exists in the underdeveloped world (Typical of this attitude is Friedman, 1968:38). It is also interpreted by some as if that poverty is "something," not disadvantaging to people very much, for it is only a temporary condition for some.

Efforts to try definition of poverty on the basis of nutrition requirement has failed for the <sup>reason that</sup> simple/nutrition requirement cannot be defined merely in terms of calories

necessary for physiological functioning in modern societies. The types of food being acceptable and the way of preparing food change with the standard of living in the society. Side by side the proportion of income spent on food also changes. In other ways, the 'minimum decency' or 'subsistence levels' are generally found to increase in real terms, with the proportion of the increasing average living of standard in the society (Rainwater, 1974).

#### Relative Approach to the Definition of Poverty.

At the other extreme, it is argued that poverty is essentially a relative phenomenon. Several scholars have opted for a relative definition of poverty. The relative approach defines poverty as the position of the individual vis-a-vis a society, primarily in the terms of distance between the poor and the average or medium standard of living in the society, thereby making poverty one aspect of inequality. The definition of the poverty line may be in absolute terms at a point in time, but what it measures is relative deprivation, and it therefore changes as the characteristic of the society concerned changes.

Now the relative definition of poverty has been accepted by both American and European researches in the post-war years (For representative American scholars, see Galbraith, 1950; Fuchs, 1965; Smolensky, 1965; Mencher, 1967; Rein, 1970; Miller and Roby, 1970; Rainwater, 1974. For representative European researches, see Coats and Silburn, 1970; Kincaid, 1973; Sleeman, 1973; Townsend, 1974; Atkinson, 1975; Robson, 1976).

The adherents of this approach have rejected the definition of poverty based on specific subsistence income level. Instead, they have defined poverty in relation to society as a whole. Relative deprivation occurs when there is significant disjuncture between the living conditions of many in most of the societies and the population that might be denoted as poor Galbraith writes

" . . people are poverty-stricken when their income, even if adequate for survival, falls markedly behind that of the community. Then they cannot have what the larger community regards as the minimum necessary for decency and they cannot wholly escape, therefore, the judgement of the larger community that they are indecent. They are degraded for, in the literal sense, they live outside the grades or categories which the community regards as acceptable . . ." (Galbraith, 1958 251)

Michael Harrington addressed the question What is poverty? and then replies that it is historically related concept. He writes

"There are new definitions in America of what man can achieve, of what a human standard of life should be." Those who suffer levels of life well below those that are possible, even though they live better than medieval knights or Asian peasants, are poor . . . . Poverty should be defined in terms of those who are denied the minimal levels of health, housing, food, and education that our present stage of scientific knowledge specifies for life as it is now lived in the United States." (Harrington, 1962 42).

On the theoretical level, the Government of United States also recognizes the relative nature of poverty. The United States' President's Commission on Income Maintenance Programmes mentions

"As society becomes more affluent it defines poverty as not only the lack of the components of a subsistence level of living, but also the lack of opportunity for persons with limited

resources to achieve the quality of life enjoyed by persons with an average amount of resources. The definition of poverty progresses from one based on absolute standards to one based on relative standards" (U S President's Commission, 1969 8).

And, a report of the Congress from the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare proudly states

"Poor persons living in the United States in the 1970s are rich in contrast to their counterparts in other times and places. They are not poor if by poor is meant the subsistence levels of living common in some other countries. Nor are most poor like their counterparts in this country fifty or one hundred years ago" (U.S. Deptt. of Health, 1976 21)

In practice, however, the United States has defined poverty in absolute terms and has drawn a poverty line based on costs of economic food basket, adjusted only for price increases. Thus, there is discrepancy between theory and practice. Even the "Institute for Research on Poverty" has adopted the absolute view (For the defense of this view, see Lampman, 1971)

Peter Townsend, an articulate exponent of this view, has suggested a proper definition of poverty in terms of relative deprivation. He writes

"Individuals and families whose resources over time fall seriously short of the resources commanded by the average individual of family in the community in which they live, whether this community is a local, national or international one, are in poverty" (Townsend, 1954:130-37).

In his recent writing, he presents a series of ingenious, specific life-rooted indicators "to provide an estimate of objective poverty on the basis of a level of deprivation disproportionate to resources" (Townsend, 1979). Townsend's

indicators show how deprivation affects daily life. For him, the poverty infects all of life, the humiliatingly small as well as the debilitatingly large. It is different to be poor, " . Misery as poor people understand — is degrading (Ascherson, 1978: 18).

Definition of poverty in relative term has, thus, involved more factors than income adequate for subsistence. They have considered the critical issues to be the result of income distribution in a society. Measure of relative deprivation brings more people under poverty than the official counts. The relative approach of conceptualization of poverty transcends the economic biases of much poverty research which are limited only to gross measures of personal or household incomes. It introduces the sociological effects of poverty as indicators of poverty. This measure has an edge over a poverty-line definition, fixed in terms of income for various households combinations and only adjusted for the cost of food basket purchased by average poor household.

The relative deprivation definition of poverty is, however, not free from its shortcomings. First, it underplays the importance of the levels of poverty-line for the characteristics of the poor. For, it is only the poverty-line which tells us how many people are below it, how far below it they are, and how many are near to poverty condition. Thus, the composition issues of poverty remain neglected, if one adheres merely to relative approach. Secondly, the relative deprivation approach tries to find out a scientific poverty threshold and forgets that the delineation of poverty

is not a "scientific exercise" It is in fact a value issue, like most questions of statistics <sup>2</sup>

There are some who attempt to combine absolute and relative factors Sen (1978) for instance, includes inequality among the poor in the index of poverty.

We have discussed the way in which poverty is conceptualized today The main issue confronting the definition of poverty is whether poverty is to be seen as an absolute or a relative condition We have shown the limitations of both types of definitions.

The subsistence definition entails far less extensive change to end poverty because it aims at providing income necessary to purchase minimal subsistence. Beyond this level disparities in wealth are acceptable Defining poverty as relative to the standard of living to the whole society means that poverty could be ended only by thoroughly restructuring the wealth of society Such a redistribution could entail major changes in social and political order.

What we feel that there are not two definitions of poverty between which one has to choose but these are two different aspects of poverty which are both important although in different ways. Therefore, it is appropriate to include both aspects of poverty in the definition, although the practical difficulties are not ruled out (For further discussion,

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<sup>2</sup>Mary Joe Bane (1972 358) concludes that five different statistics applied to the same data give somewhat different results. There is no mathematical basis for preferring one statistics to another For comment on relative deprivation, see Miller and Devey (1981 266-74).

see Dorothy, 1972, Ferman, Kombluh and Maber, 1968, Korpi, 1980 287-314)

It must be made clear that if by absolute poverty is meant poverty defined by reference only to absolute standards, it is a misconception. The interpretation of the absolute factors is always based on some appreciation of the welfare and values of society as a whole, there is always a relative component in any definition of poverty, even one in which only 'vital minimum' is considered. Thus the distinction between absolute and relative poverty can be misleading if this fact is ignored. We feel that the two approaches to poverty are not independent.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, it is also wrong to say that relative deprivation definition is applicable to the affluent societies and absolute definition in poor countries. We are of the view that norms and levels of living characterize all societies. And, falling far below these levels are serious matters in terms of individual's happiness, self-perception, and relationship everywhere. So it would be wrong to understand that the

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<sup>3</sup> Rodgers changes the terminology in order to escape from the confusion between absolute and relative poverty. He distinguishes between what he calls 'ordinal poverty' and 'cardinal poverty'. Cardinal poverty makes reference to a specified poverty line, a bundle of economic, social and cultural goods, services and possibilities; ordinal poverty refers to a comparison between different members of society in terms of their access to what is considered good or useful in that society. The cardinal poverty line is invariably established by reference to cardinal criteria because absolute factors are inadequate to define it (Rodgers, 1979)

analysis of poverty consists of defining an absolute poverty line, and counting those below it. In fact, poverty is a manifestation of social systems. There is no universal, absolute definition of poverty. There cannot be any universal poverty line.

### THE DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY

This brings us to consider the dimensions of poverty. The dimension refers to the composition of poverty. There is a distinction between the characteristics or components of poverty — i.e., the elements by which it is defined — and the factors involved in the generation of poverty (For further discussion, see Rodgers, 1976 261-76). The dimensions or components of poverty form a vector by which poverty can be defined and measured. Many of these dimensions are inter-related, and, therefore, also contribute to the generation of poverty. But there are several variables which have a role in the explanation of poverty without contributing to its definition. There is, of course, some room for debate as to whether particular variables are components of poverty or causes. The dimensions or variables considered in the definition of poverty are relevant not only for policy matters but also for understanding the causes of poverty and for evaluating programmes to reduce poverty.

There are two popular approaches for discerning the components or dimensions of poverty to define it. One is mono-dimensional or single variate approach and the other is multi-dimensional or multi variate approach.

### Mono-Dimensional or Single-Variate Approach

Several scholars have relied almost exclusively on the single variate approach. Among single variables, the income criteria for delineating and defining poverty are most popular. "Money is", says Haggstrom "a generalized source of power over people through a right to control over goods and services. As such money is one of many kinds of power. Poverty, therefore, is one of many kinds of powerlessness, of being subject to one's social situations instead to being able to affect it through action, that is through behaviour which flows from decisions and plans" (Haggstrom, 1980 329). Thus, the lack or inadequacy of income is most common factor included in the definition of poverty. Considerable works have been done to refine the income definition of poverty (Moon and Smolensky, 1977). These efforts include the value of in-kind transfers into the income-measures (Smeeding, 1975). Discussions of the measure of poverty indicate, however, that the definition of poverty cannot be limited to income but that other resources should also be considered. So the control over capital is also included besides the income (Weisbrod and Hanson, 1977). Some scholars have included earnings capacity also in order to define poverty (Gartinkel and Haveman, 1977). But it is realized that income alone as a criterion is not sufficient dimension of poverty, although it is significant.

Several other scholars have taken calories, protein, life expectancy, years of schooling, etc., to analyse poverty, but none of them singularly is sufficient dimension of poverty

Before we proceed, it is worth considering whether a detailed analysis of poverty in terms of a single characteristic is worthwhile. Will not the definition of poverty in terms of income or calorie-intake, suffice? In practice, the answer is yes. Of course, some idea of what a given income corresponds to in physical terms is implicit. Such an analysis is useful to discern aggregate trends, the income or calorie intake may well be a good first approximation of poverty. But when it comes to what is going on at the micro-level, or when policy formulation is objective, the single variable approach is clearly inadequate because of the multi-variate nature of poverty. The income or calorie intake gives only a proxy for certain aspects of poverty, but omits many facets of poverty and deprivation. In general different dimensions of poverty may interact or move in different directions, and will usually need to be separated out. This possibly cannot be captured by single variable approach to poverty. The level of living — the actual conditions of the people — cannot be contained within the parameters of a single criterion, although indispensable.

#### Multi-Dimensional or Multi-Variate Approach

A large number of scholars, especially European, has depended on multi-dimensional criteria because of the multi-variate nature of poverty. They argue that poverty must be

defined as a vector of satisfactions and deprivations which results from the level of living of the poor. So the individual's 'level of living' is preferred as defining criteria of poverty.

Efforts to describe systematically the life situation of man including both the 'standard of living' and the 'standard of life' are as old as the social sciences themselves. By passage of time more refined methods have developed and the scope of the study has widened. The interest in social indicators could be seen as the latest step in this evaluation, consisting of a synthesis of modern methods and theoretical position (Gross, 1960).

To be sure, various studies of social indicators differ in their origins and immediate aims. For instance, NASA ordered such a study to bring out the second degree consequences of the technical innovations produced by the space programme (Buer, 1966; 1968). In France attempts of this kind were tried to the drafting of national plan (Shonfield and Shaw, 1972). The Swedish studies were initiated as a contribution to the discussion of the low-income problem by an official committee (Johansson, 1970, Von Otter, 1973). In the United States, such a study resulted in the production of a report (U.S. Deptt. of H.E.W., 1969).

Be as that may, let us first clarify, in brief, the meaning of the term 'level of living' because it is kept confused with two other most frequently used terms, 'standards of living' and 'norms of living'. These three terms are used

sometimes separately and sometimes interchangeably while having different connotations. According to the U N Committee "the standard' and 'norms' which are concerned with what ought to be, serve as a means of evaluating the adequacy of what is (the level)" (U N , 1954). In fact, the 'standard of living' refers to the aspirations or expectations of life, the 'norm of living' to desirable conditions of life and the 'level of living' to the actual living conditions of the people. While the 'standard of living' is essentially subjective kind of yardstick, the 'norm of living' refers to the objective criteria laid down from outside. From this point of view, the 'norm of living' may be interpreted as an index of the measuring the 'level of living' and the 'standard of living' may be treated as the means of measuring the flow of welfare.

There is, however, no unanimity on the meaning of the 'level of living'. This term has been variously defined. According to Drenowski, "the level of living of a population is the level of satisfaction of its needs attained in a unit of time as a result of the flow of goods and services the population enjoys in that unit of time" (Drenowski, 1968). But this definition lacks clarity. The level of satisfaction cannot be equated with the flow of goods and services consumed by the population. The availability of goods and services does not guarantee satisfaction. Many a times the level of living is equated with the purchasing power of the population (Bannet, 1951 632-49; Laskar, 1954; I.S.S , 1960, Banklin, 1967 271-98, Dandekar and Rath, 1970, Bardhan, 1973).

Despite the fact that a large number of studies have been made to find out the level of living and measure the poverty, there is remarkably little consensus in the literature as to what to be included in the level of living and how poverty should be measured. Furthermore, most of the poverty measures have been designed to select a low income sample from the broader population. The implicit assumption of these studies appears to be that poverty sector, once identified, is homogeneous on all relevant economic aspects. By contrast, there are very few studies which try to measure relative degrees of poverty within a sample that has been identified as extremely low.

Johansson, who drew on several scholarly writings such as those of Titmuss, Drewnowski, John Stuart Mill and Karl Popper, defines level of living on the basis of two conceptions: a theory of needs and command over resources. Following U N Study (U.N , 1961), he says that the level of living is "the level of satisfaction of the needs of the population assured by the flow of goods and services enjoyed in a unit of time". Based on writings of R A Titmuss, he defines, level of living as command over resources in money, possessions, knowledge, psychic and physical energy, social relations, security, etc., by the help of which the individual can control and consciously direct his conditions of life". Johansson observes that both of these views — the conception of needs (U N Spokesman) and the conception of resources (Titmuss) — should be used in empirical study. He thus groups the components of the level of living into "need components" and "resource components"

Following Karl Popper's distinction between "utopian" and "piece-meal" social engineering, Johansson adopts "good life" and "bad conditions". The levels of living, then, cannot be conceived only in terms of subjective satisfaction, of fulfilment of needs, but also in terms of control over resources (Johansson, 1972; 1973 211-19, Erikson, 1976 57-65)

The content of the level of living has of course been subject to considerable debate. A considerable amount of work has been done by the social scientists for locating the social variables related to level of living of the people (Drewnowski, 1967, 1968, McGranahan, 1969)

One basis of defining poverty is the community attributes such as skill composition, unemployment rates, wage levels, and so on. Using these criteria, the 'pockets of poverty' or 'community of poverty' is located. It is presumed that where 'pockets of poverty' are found, the future development of economy becomes stagnant and insufficient. One shortcoming of this outlook is that it overlooks the large number of economically impoverished individuals and families that influence community (Ferman et al., 1968, Oranti, 1966; Orhansky, 1969, Morgan and Smith, 1969 450-62, Hyer, 1975; 652-63, Mom and Smolensky, 1977; Osmond and Durkin, 1979 87-95) and such a nomenclature of community keeps their interests neglected. The community resource based criterion of poverty may be interpreted in another way also. A community may provide public services which serve as income-supplement, other resources which serve as adjustment of coping aids and

a wide opportunity field for individual development and involvement

Another dimension of delineating poverty is the negative-risk criteria. The poor are defined in terms of their lack of skill level, education, and training due to which they are deprived of the access to economic resources and rewards of the society. The weakest aspect of such a definition is the assumption that cause of poverty lies within the individual and eradication of the poverty must be oriented towards individual. Obviously this view neglects factors outside the individual

Next, the poverty is defined and delineated on basis of the behavioural or attitudinal criteria. This definition hinges on the concept of "culture of poverty" (Lewis, 1970; cf , Herzog, 1966). It implies that the poor share a distinctive type of values, traits, and belief-complex which set them off from the non-poor group of the society. This type of culture matrix is the product of the continued economic deprivation and socialization in a milieu of economic inadequacy. It is assumed that the 'culture of poverty' has a tendency to permeate among the children of <sup>the</sup> poor. Harrington points to "a personality of poverty, a type of human being produced by the grinding, wearing life of the slums" (Harrington, 1962). Certain objections are raised on accepting the definition of poverty by reference to a culture complex. One serious objection to it is that there are different groups of the poverty-stricken people who are spread in different geographical location and live in different opportunity structure.

So it is wrong to say that there is a single "culture of poverty" It is proper to refer to "cultures of poverty"

One approach is to distinguish three classes of components of poverty food consumption (disaggregated by nutrient), non-food consumption (disaggregated by type) and a social group of variables (health, security, education, status) (Rodgers, 1976) Recent work on basic needs has followed the same tradition and include such variables as participation, self-reliance, mobility, contraception, etc (Khan, 1977, Hopkins, 1977; Majeres, 1977)

British sociologist, Townsend, (1970; 1977, see also Rainwater, 1974) has adopted multi-dimensional approach to the conceptualization of the poverty He analysed the data through demographic characteristics. According to Drewnowski, "level of social-development of people's well-being cannot and should not be measured by GNP, personal income or expenditure per head. A special yardstick of measuring social variables should be devised" (Drewnowski, 1967 123) He divided the overall living into two groups of components (a) physical needs (nutrition or food intake, shelter and health), and (b) cultural needs (education, leisure and reaction and security).

Following the same argument, McGranahan has developed a concept of socio-economic profile which explains the relation between social factors and economic growth (McGranahan, 1969). The influence exerted by social factors (levels of living or human resources) upon economic growth is to be mainly dependent upon the following conditions: the social structure, the

structure of the distribution of incomes and levels of living, the structure of production and related economic aspects, and the characteristics of the social factors themselves. Johansson has broken down the level of living concept into nine components, namely (1) Health and the use of medical care; (b) Work and working condition, (3) Education, (4) Economic resources, (5) Political resources, (6) Family background and family relations, (7) Housing and environment, (8) Security to life and property, and (9) Leisure and recreation.

We are of the view that multi-dimensional approach in the definition of poverty is more suitable than a single dimension approach. The single dimensional approach supplements rather than competes with multi-dimensional approach. These earlier works provide the perspective in which we propose to examine the level of living on the basis of primary-level data.

The level of living approach has been thrown into confusion because of the conflict between those interested in targets and those interested in mechanisms. Politically, target-setting is useful, but it is sterile analytically. However, that framework is preferable for the analysis of mechanism.

In fact, the components of poverty has two implications for the poor: satisfaction and deprivation. The poverty affects the satisfactions by the level of living on the one hand and begets deprivation on the other hand. For instance, the poor may be both dissatisfied with the life he lives and deprived relative to the norms generated by development.

processes or reference group. Any definition of poverty must include the components of poverty that reflect satisfaction and deprivation.

The space does not permit as also it is not the proper place to try and list in detail all the various categories that go to define poverty. This exercise can only be done in a specific context. We have selected the following nine components of poverty: (1) Occupation and unemployment; (2) Income and assets, (3) Food consumption, (4) Health, (5) Shelter, (6) Education, (7) Power and politics, (8) Demographic features, and (9) Values, interests and activities. Only the much here, we shall return back to the details again in the following chapter.

There are few issues of particular importance to an overall perspective of poverty which must be mentioned in passing. One issue appertains to the perception by the poor of themselves. The degree of deprivation of the poor depends upon the strength of their contact with the norms of behaviour and consumption which define their poverty. The impact of apparent inequality in terms of education, mass communication, mobility, etc., is likely to adversely affect the perception of the poor even if the real incomes of the poor remain stable. The perception of the poor who live in urban areas is likely to differ from those who live in rural areas. There may be different 'sub-cultures of poverty' which provide not only defense mechanism against deprivation but also generates negative reactions. In this way, the analysis of the characteristics of poverty must take into account the perceptions

of the poor by the poor themselves. The analysis must incorporate the choice made by the poor and the degree of control and the constraints which limit them. We have not to be guided by the naive assumption that the outside observer's value judgements are necessarily superior to those of the poor's unless there are powerful reasons to believe that the choices made by the poor are incorrect.

A second issue relates to the security. Much human activity undoubtedly depends upon the quest for security (Maslow, 1968). Security has various facets: it may be physical security (safety from death, from violence), economic security (likelihood of sharp decline in living standards), and social security (continuity of education of children), among others. The mechanism providing security vary with the institutional context. We must have to understand in detail the extent to which the quest for security conditions the behaviour.

Another, a third and final, issue relates to the interpretation of poverty in the overall framework of hierarchy, control, exploitation and inequality. This issue, in one sense, belongs to the analysis of causation of poverty. Yet it is necessary to build some concept of the social system and the economic and social relationships between different groups in the society. And, most striking of these relationships are those based on class, or more generally on production relations. In other words, one must see the position of the individual or group vis-a-vis the production process and the way in which power over this production is generated.

These structural features of society must condition the way the poverty is viewed and defined. Even when they do not themselves form the components of poverty, they do help to identify poor groups as opposed to poor individuals

In summary, then, the poverty can be explored with the help of multi-variables that constitute poverty. Many of these components can be quantified but, for several others, qualitative measures are essential. Some variables such as income, level of nutrition, level of physical consumption, and, to some extent, levels of education, participation and certain other variables can be treated qualitatively. And, in the ultimate analysis we have to have appreciation of the contribution of each of the components of poverty to life-styles, to satisfactions and deprivations. We need to understand how each defining element of poverty is generated, what are its sources, and how does it interact with other dimensions of poverty

#### THE TYPES OF POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

A moments' reflection on such related concepts as indigence, penury, and destitution makes it clear that there are variable degrees of poverty. Despite that the label of 'poor' is given to groups of widely varying conditions as if there is only one group of poor, but this is not the case. In the past, slaves of the Roman Empire, the serfs of the Middle Ages, the peons of Latin America, the inmates of English poor houses and the Shudras of India were called poor. In the last two centuries, several new labels have been given to the

poor in order to remove the stigma. For example, the poor farmers in the countryside and slum dwellers in the urban areas are called 'poor'. More recently, new characterizing designation of the 'poor' is 'Hard-to-Reach'. And, efforts are on to affix new labels to poor. Whatever be the intentions behind the characterizing or classificatory designations of the poor, one thing is clear there are varied degrees of poverty.

### Classical Typology

Let us look at some of the classical and modern typologies of the poverty and inequality. Classical typologies of the poverty and inequality are those of Plato, Aristotle and Rousseau, for example. Plato, in his Republic, wanted to create a society where each individual assumes the occupation for which he is best fitted. He made the Republic, the product solely of the division of labour (Plato, 1875). He distinguished between inherent inequality of men and social inequality based on providing the men their occupation for which they deserve. In Politics, Aristotle gave the scheme of three classes present in all States. one class is very rich, another very poor and a third is a mean. He also gave a dichotomous scheme one is the basic division of people into freed and slave; and the other is the division into those who work and those who do not (Aristotle, 1912). Rousseau made a distinction between natural and moral inequality (Rousseau, 1912).

### Modern Typology

In the modern literature dealing with poverty, one can get various typologies of poverty based on different bases. One basis of classifying poverty is moral one. Moralists divide poverty into two types the deserving and the non-deserving. Although inadequate and meaningless, this typology has survived for a remarkably long time (Marian Yarrow et al , 1955)

Galbraith made distinction between "insular poverty" and "case poverty". "Insular poverty" points out to the environmental poverty say, for instance, those who live in rural areas or depressed areas. The other category of "case poverty" relates to personal causes of poverty. Galbraith says that "case poverty" is commonly and properly related to (such) characteristics of individuals so uplifted (as) mental deficiency, bad health, inability to adapt to discipline of modern economic life, excessive procreation, alcoholism, insufficient education (Galbraith, 1958). It seems that the poverty for Galbraith is on account of individual defects. One critic of Galbraith remarks that his typology of poverty smacks of "Social-Darwinism". In fact, the characteristics outlined by Galbraith are as much the result of poverty as its cause (Macdonald, 1968)

A distinction is made between "economic level" and "low cost poverty level". These two types delineate two empirical categories which greatly differ in size and social characteristics (Bogue and Beak, 1961 VII-XL, Orhansky, 1965 12).

Harrington's typology of the poverty combines both causes as well as the visibility of the poverty. According to him, there are six types of poor: (1) the unemployed marginal farmers and farm workers, (2) Negroes, (3) deviants (beats, alcoholics, urban hillbillies), (4) the aged, (5) the mental health problem, and (6) slum dwellers (Harrington, 1962).

Humphrey -- a spokesman of the liberal idea -- used a practical combination of causes and visibility and came forward with a six-fold typology of the poor: (1) urban poverty, (2) rural poverty, (3) depressed areas Negroes, (4) welfare-recipients, (5) the undereducated; and (f) the unemployed (Humphrey, 1964).

S.M. Miller, basing his typology on the combination of economic security and familial stability, classified poverty into four types, (1) the stable poor; (2) the strained, (3) the copers, and (4) the unstable (Miller, 1964: 120-22). Miller's typology is sociological one which combines within it a large number of factors.

Kosa classified the poverty into two: chronic and acute. The chronic poverty implies a long established life-long or perhaps multi-generational gap deprivation process and the acute poverty implies deprivation following a period spent above the poverty level (Kosa, 1964).

Recently, Tumin specified five forms of inequality: (1) role differentiation, (2) ranking in accordance with functional contribution, (3) diffusion and transfers of "differentials in property, power and prestige"; (4) ranking in accordance with intrinsic attributes of a role, and (5) ranking in terms of approximation to social values and norms (Tumin, 1963).

Dahrendorf made a distinction between inequality of natural capabilities and those of social position. Inequality of social position is further distinguished between inequality that do not involve any ranking order and those which do. He then combines the two approaches and comes up with a four-fold typology of inequality. In relation to individual there are (1) Natural differences of kinds in features, character, and interests, (2) Natural difference of rank in intelligence, talent and strength. Correspondingly, in relation to society (and in the language of contemporary sociology) there are (3) Social differentiation of positions essentially equal in rank; and (4) Social stratification based on reputation and wealth and expressed in a rank order of social status.

The typologies of poverty and inequality are legion. These are some selected examples. It is fruitless to add more types of the poor to the list. Let us now look at the tacit assumptions of these typologies of the poor. First, it transpires that there is not one class of poor but many varieties of them. Secondly, each generation sees poverty differently and judges it according to a particular set of social values, which may be quite unlike those of an earlier era. Thirdly, there can be no uniform definition of poverty. Perhaps Sumner is right here when he declared that there was no possible definition of "a poor man". The term 'poor' and 'poverty' seemed dangerously elastic and capable of covering a host of social fallacies" (Sumner, 1983 19-20). Finally, the structure of poverty and the attendant complications have changed (Beteille, 1969).

In our study we have categorised poor into three types — the poor, the poorer and the poorest. As the words imply, the socio-economic condition of the poor is better than the poorer and the poorest. The poorer occupy the second place and the poorest the last. The implication is that all are poor but there are degrees of poverty. The poorest of the poor lie at the rock-bottom, they cannot manage even two ordinary meals a day due to their abject poverty. The poorer among the poor are those who manage two meals a day with difficulty. The poor are those who do have some means of their livelihood for two meals a day and nothing much beyond these to cover the subsistence minimum defined by society.

#### IDEOLOGIES THAT MAINTAIN AND PERPETUATE POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

There are three prominent traditions of political thought — liberalism, conservatism, and socialism — which dominated the scene over centuries. From these emerged two differing interpretations of poverty — one is individualistic represented by liberalism, and the other is societal represented by conservatism and socialism.

#### Individualistic Ideologies of Poverty and Inequality

Individualistic interpretation — a product of liberalism — emerged out of the revolt against the authoritarian government. Despite differences, liberals, by and large, focussed on the needs of individuals and thereby relegated the needs of the state or society to a secondary or even irrelevant position. They asserted that individuals have an

inherent right to seek private ends and must be free to have and use private property. This individualistic materialism supported capitalism as the most appropriate form of economic organization, declared laissez-faire as the best doctrine, and denied that poverty could be legitimate subject for public policy. Poor people were seen as no different from anyone else. The poor's status reflected their (in)ability in the competition with the nonpoor.

To be sure, there is not one but three brands of liberalism: some believe in natural order, others have faith in utilitarian philosophy, and still others accept the organic relationship between individual and social growth. Everyone of them maintains and perpetuates poverty and inequality, albeit in different ways, while stressing freedom and equality to individuals (Hobhouse, 1964).

One group of liberals justified human freedom through the concept of a natural order. John Locke, for instance, argued that God had set a natural order and before the existence of civil society men lived in a sort of pre-social state, called the state of nature, and in virtue of a contract among themselves, society came into existence. This came to be known as social contract theory (Locke, 1890). He believed that man in the state of nature was enjoying ideal liberty, free from any social requirements; but in order to ensure the exercise of his liberty he entered into a contract by which the individuals conferred power, not to the government, but to the community. This contract is not absolute, because the natural rights of life, liberty and property, remain in the

hands of individuals. In other words, not every right in society comes from the state.

Another group of the liberals demolished the idea that government originated in a social contract. A generation after Locke, Hume argued that the government is the creation of the human need, it is the utility which dictated that men follow government. This came to be known as the doctrine of 'utilitarianism', for it justified government on the ground of being useful to man. To be more to the point, it was based on 'egoistic-individualism' assuming that pleasure alone was good.

The third group of liberals drawing from the utilitarian philosophy justified the laissez-faire economics (Smith, 1776). Adam Smith, for example, justified human freedom on the basis of the organic relationship between individual and social growth. He believed that a natural harmony existed in the economic order, and expressed this harmony through the image of an 'invisible hand'.

The three brands of individualistic interpretations — social contract theory, the doctrine of utilitarianism, and the principle of laissez-faire — did differ in their mode of explanation, but all combined in one to argue for individual liberty and equality and limiting the role of government to protection of life, liberty, and property. Implicitly, they all denied that poverty could be the legitimate subject of public policy.

Let us demonstrate the applicability of these principles in social situations through two examples from the classical

the literature, one of Weber and ~~the~~ other of Sumner. First of all let us look at Max Weber. According to him, the religious ethics was closely linked to capitalism. As he indicated, Protestantism, particularly the Calvinist sect, was tied to capitalism and provided a rationale and defence for the system (Weber, 1930). By implication, the poverty came to be viewed as a sign of individual moral weakness, measures to deal with the poor were harsh and condemnatory.

Second example is that of Sumner. Drawing from Darwin's evolutionary theory of survival of the fittest to human society, the Social Darwinist combined in one the materialistic individualism reflected in laissez-faire capitalist doctrine and social analogies. Sumner, for instance, maintained that there could be no possibility of social reform of the poor (Sumner, 1900 19-27). For him, the poverty is an individual matter: an individual failed in the economic struggle due to his own fault, idleness, bad habits, intemperance, vices, and similar other human weaknesses. So only the individual could overcome it. While defending this position, Sumner negated any obligation of the society to help the poor. According <sup>to</sup> Hofstadter, "Like some latter-day Calvin, he came to preach the predestination of the social order and the salvation of the economically elect through the survival of the fittest" (Hofstadter, 1958 66).

By the middle of the nineteenth century individualistic approach to poverty came under sharp attack of both conservatives and socialists. Scholars scoffed at the idea that personal diligence and virtue determined whether a man was

poor or rich In the process of criticism, a different view emerged which argued that it was not because of the individual fault, but because of social system the poor are poor and stay poor And this brings us to the societal interpretation of poverty.

### Social Ideologies of Poverty and Inequality

Both conservatives and socialists, despite their sharp differences, agreed on at least one thing the social order was superior to privately determined individual rights They conceived individuals as parts of the organic whole, creations of their society.

The conservative tradition emphasized inherent human inequality. For instance, Edmund Burke, one of the most ardent adherents of this tradition, rejected in toto the concept of natural social equality and argued that the natural differences of rank now in existence arose from a natural division of labour. And, then went on to assert that the natural aristocracy should rule men of ability and wealth should lead European conservatives went even a step further than Burke in emphasizing the mystical qualities of the state that deserved man's reverence (Maistre, 1796, Bonald, 1802, Fichte, 1806). Like liberals, but for entirely different reasons, conservatives combined in one to argue that poverty was not a legitimate subject for public policy. The state could do nothing to aid the poor nor should it try.

Socialism shared the conservatives' idea that social order was superior to privately determined individual rights

but differed about role of society and state towards poor. There are two brands of socialism Pre-Marxian and Marxian. The Pre-Marxian socialist philosophy emphasized the social element in human relationships (For a concise analysis of the utopian socialists, see Cole, 1959, I) and argued that men should promote the general well-being which was compatible with any social order based on a competitive struggle for the means of livelihood.

The Marxian socialists labelled the pre-Marxian socialists as 'utopian'. They attributed social life and its development entirely to the economic factor (Marx and Engels, 1846, 1867, 1871). The Marxian socialist thought maintained that the poverty was not the result of individual failure but of economic and social forces, and these forces were appropriate subject for public policy ✓. The state could act to eradicate poverty, and it should. They anticipated a classless society of equal humans as the ultimate expression of the socialist ideal. However, those who followed Marx, say Leninist and Stalinist writers, assumed that during the transitional period (the period which is unspecified) an elite — technical experts, or "the vanguard", or "the party" — would plan for, and act on behalf of the masses.

It must be mentioned in passing that in reaction to conservatism and pre-socialism, and in order to contain the mounting criticism, arose a new brand of liberalism which came to be known as 'organic liberalism'. One of its proponents, T. H. Green, upheld both individual freedom and inequality as well as the inherent right of individual to seek

private ends, but he took organic view of society. Green came to see that liberty must not be merely negative (freedom from government interference), it must be positive as well freedom for development (Green, 1882). Organic liberalism did allow a positive active function in relation to poverty. However, while recognizing the problems of poverty of the poor people, it did not favour the idea of the liquidation of capitalism. What it wanted was just to soften the harsh effects of capitalism.

In conclusion, then, the two interpretations — individualistic and societal, argued that the poverty was not a proper subject for the public policy. It were these ideologies which perpetuate and maintain poverty and inequality. However, it was the socialism, especially the Marxian, which treated poverty as product of social existence and argued that the poverty must be brought within the purview of social reform.

We are of the view that the poverty is the product of society. However, the interplay between personality, society and culture is accepted. It is, therefore, the duty of the society to eradicate poverty, remove inequality, and create a milieu wherein each member realizes his best.

#### THEORIES EXPLAINING POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

One of the crucial issues concerning poverty and inequality is why societies patronise, permit, or prefer poverty and inequality and follow differential evaluations, practices and policies. The post-war sociologists, critics and other commentators are sharply split into two camps on this issue.

One school of thought maintains that in this era of unprecedented transformations of the society the concept of poverty and inequality is useless and a classless society is in offing. The other school of thought takes an opposite stand and holds that the poverty and inequality is continuing before, during, and since the great transformations of society. The former school of thought is termed as 'class convergence' theory (Blumberg, 1980) or the ideology of what Ossowski called 'non-egalitarian classlessness' (Ossowski, 1963) and the latter as 'class stability' theory implying the continuity of the class structure.

#### The Class Convergence Theory

The fundamental argument of the class convergence theory is that societies of the world have come to such a pass where the class differences either no longer exist, or, are in the process of disappearing and doomed to disappear in this era of abundance. To be sure, the history of the class convergence ideology is very short, it is a product of the post-war era.

The logic of class convergence derives mainly from the two central theories: the tradition of classlessness and the tradition of abundance. And, the underlying theoretical foundations of these two traditions brought together various elements, including affluent society thesis, end-of-ideology theory, and the image of the post-industrial society (Reissman, 1950; Whyte, 1956; Galbraith, 1958; Bell, 1964, 1974; Nisbet, 1959; Wilensky, 1966 12-28; 1964 173-97; Mayer, 1963 460-68,

Silverman and Yanowitch, 1974 117-22, Mayer, 1959 605-26, Drucker, 1971; Blumberg, 1974 480-94, Aron, 1968, Mayer, 1973; Kristol, 1978) Most common major themes, among others, which were marshalled to prove the class convergence thesis, are (i) affluence, (ii) the standard package, (iii) economic transformation, (iv) cultural uplift and homogenization, (v) embourgeoisement, (vi) class consciousness and class struggle, and (vii) citizenship. It is interesting to note that each and every argument of the proponents of the 'non-egalitarian classlessness' thesis was rebutted by those who took an opposite stance and held that class and class-relations retained their fundamental stability (Miller and Reissman, 1961 507-16, Gans, 1974, Hamilton, 1964 42-55; 1966 192-99, Levison, 1974, Sexton and Sexton, 1971; Parker, 1972, Aronowitz, 1973, 1974, Rubin, 1976, Rinehart, 1971 149-61, Westergaard, 1966 77-108, Zeitlin, 1977, Goldthrope et al , 1968, 1968a, 1969)

FIRST The class convergence theorists argued that it is an era of affluence There has not only been the impressive rise in the absolute standard of living, but also a radical redistribution of income resulting in the proportion of income shares going to those lying at the lowest rung of the ladder (Kuznets, 1962). Wherever and whatever poverty is there in the affluent society, it is more nearly an after-thought (Galbraith, 1958) And, by the early 60s, when it was pointed out that there was widespread poverty, they took shelter of the census data and other bases, and managed to

define poverty out of existence once again (Harrington, 1977 15-17, Denziger, 1979 60-61)

The opponents did agree that living standards of the people increased the status of the most persons during post-war era. What was denied by the critics was that all have benefited from this rise in the living standard. The critics argue that the distribution of income and wealth was extraordinarily unequal; that there had been no significant movement towards a more equitable distribution of either <sup>4</sup> and that it has remained essentially unchanged since 1945 (Lampman, 1959, 1962; Harrington, 1977; Matza, 1966, Orant, 1962, Pachter, 1957 315-18, Wedderburn, 1962 257-82, Townsend 1962; Townsend and Abel-Smith, 1965, Titmuss, 1962, Myrdal, 1963; Yanowitch, 1963 683-97; Blumberg, 1974).

SECOND The class convergence theorists based their argument on what David Reisman called "Standard Package" One of the implicit assumptions of this phrase was that the rise in the income in the affluent societies permitted a large number of people from all strata to acquire goods and services rendered available The second tacit assumption was that the ownership of enormous array of consumer's durables has trickled down the social structure The third assumption was that

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<sup>4</sup>The U S together with France has a high degree of inequality in the distribution of the income (Sawyer, 1976). According to Wiles, in Sweden the rich receive three times more than the poor; in Britain and Denmark six times more, and in the U S thirteen times more (Wiles, 1974).

goods once possessed only by the rich are now widely distributed throughout the class structure (Aron, 1968) and the satiation of need with the material abundance would soon reach a condition of utter wantlessness (Reisman, 1965 289) Thus, the proponents of the class convergence theory negated a large number of thinkers — Hocks, Malthus, Saitre, Marx and others — for whom scarcity, especially material, is a fundamental cause of human conflict

The thesis of the universal 'standard package' was rejected by the opponents. They argued that there still continues to be substantial inequities in the distribution of innumerable consumer durables and home furnishings as well (Blumberg, 1974 487; U S , 1978) The quantitative gains were upset by the qualitative deterioration in the style-of-life Hence the 'standard package' thesis is untenable

THIRD The class convergence theorists rested their logic on the economic transformation and the attendant consequences They argued that vast industrial and occupational changes had upgraded the entire work place and narrowed down class-differences. In Collin Clarks' apt discussion, there is occupational shift from primary (agriculture, mining) to secondary (manufacturing) to tertiary (services) occupation (Clark, 1965). Drawing from this, the adherents of the class convergence view saw the centrality of theoretical knowledge and explosive growth of a professional managerial class (Burnham, 1941, Dahrendorf, 1959, Drucker, 1971.286, 1977.7-22) According to them, the working class of Marx was becoming both

demographically and sociologically obsolete and is destined to be liquidated (Drucker, 1971:287, Bell, 1974 125) There is what Dahrendorf called the "decomposition of capital" The implication is that the property ownership has now been rendered irrelevant to the exercise of social and economic power and replaced by knowledge, technical competence.

The disappearance of the working class thesis was rejected by the critics In absolute numbers, they say, there were three times as many manual workers (31 millions) in 1979 in the U S as there were at the turn of the century (10 millions) which is symptom of an enormous increase in the working class (Bell, 1974 137). Similarly it was also rejected by them that white-collar workers are increasing more in number than the blue-collar workers and it was alleged that it was merely statistical sleight (U S , 1975 139-40, 1974 35-36) In fact, the number of workers classified as white-collar in the census includes service workers, most of whom closely resemble blue-collar workers in income, occupational status, collection and working conditions (Levison, 1974) It was also denied by them that a post-industrial society has upgraded the workers' skills. Braverman, in his classic book, Labour and Monopoly Capital, observes that present system had reduced the skills of millions of workers (Braverman, 1974) The logic that the expansion of technical and professional occupation has created a society based on centrality of theoretical knowledge is criticized, and argued that the trial society is "centrality of theoretical ignorance". In advance societies, technical

professionals learn more and more about less and less, developing what Veblen terms 'trained incapacity' to understand anything outside of their narrow sphere of technical expertise (Veblen, 1973, Heilbroner, 1973) The thesis of the decomposition of capital has been rejected (Bright, 1958, Blumberg, 1969) on the ground that a large number of leading corporations are still buying proprietary ownership (Zeitlin, 1977; Pedersen and Tabb, 1976 53-66)

FOURTH The proponents of class convergence theory hold that under the impact of dominant social and technological forces in modern societies, the distinctive class sub-culture has been systematically eroded and a common culture shared by all is in the offing Commenting on cultural homogenization and uplift, Wilensky observes " modern societies tend towards cultural standardization -- a widespread sharing of beliefs, values and tastes, cross-cutting groups and categories, the forces that work are well known -- popular education and mass literacy, high rates of social and residential mobility, the emergence of national market and a national politics, both making use of nation-wide media or mass-entertainment" (Wilensky, 1964 178)

The thesis of cultural homogenization and uplift was also rejected by critics. They became skeptical about the role of culture-producing and -transmitting agencies For instance, education was seen as an institution subverted by a class society The critics felt that the class system is able to transform to whatever egalitarian institution existed

into an instrument of class privilege (Havighurst and Neugarten, 1975, Christopher et al., 1979, Detore, 1979). In the past, the occupations were transmitted by fathers to sons by inheritance, now the transmission of the occupations was affected by the possession of college diploma (Collins, 1971 1002-19). According to Gans, only simple societies are homogeneous, modern societies create and sustain "aesthetic pluralism" (Gans, 1974). He enumerated five post-war traits of culture in the United States: high culture, upper-middle culture, lower-middle culture, low culture, and quasi-fold low culture.

FIFTH The class convergence model leans heavily on the theory of embourgeoisement of working-class both in economic and cultural sense for its arguments. It is argued that the income gap between blue-collar workers themselves, and between the white-collar employees above them, have been narrowing (Burns, 1954 257-67). Due to growing affluence and homogenization of culture, the manual workers have become absorbed into the enormous middle class. Mayer states, "the traditional dividing line between manual workers and white-collar employees no longer holds because large segments of the working class now share a white-collar style-of-life and many also accept middle class values and beliefs" (Mayer, 1959).

The critics reject the notion of working class embourgeoisement. They argue that even though the highest paid blue-collar workers may presently earn more than the white-collar low paid workers and even if taken for granted that blue-collar workers are more prosperous than ever before in

history, the affluence is not necessarily embourgeoisement for both economic and cultural reasons. The fundamental class position of workers remain unchanged despite rising income. According to the British sociologist- Goldthrope and his associates,

"the acquisition by manual workers and their families of relatively high incomes and living standards does not, on our evidence, lead to widespread change in their social values and life-styles in the direction of 'middle classness'" . (Goldthrope et al., 1968 61-62)

Similar other studies of working class hold that class distinction still persists in advanced industrial society (Odaka, 1966, Vogel, 1963, Dore, 1966, Goldthrope and Lockwood et al., 1968; Andrieux and Lignon, 1960; Popiz et al. , 1957, Bednorik, 1963; Berger, 1960) The manual workers had to pay very heavy price for the affluence as they work in dangerous working conditions. Blue-collar class has been called rightly an "endangered species", because of on-the-job threat to life and limb (Nadar et al., 1976 145-148)

The critics hold that the thesis of social mobility is farce. Men born in the working class usually end up there. According to Blau and Duncan, for blue-collar worker getting ahead means normally collective rather than individual occupational mobility (Blau and Duncan, 1967) Berger found that even in suburbia manual worker retained their distinctive values and behaviour (Berger, 1960, Dobriner, 1963) Miller and Reissman write that "even at the same income level (even relatively high one) wage earners have different tastes, styles and modes of reaction than middle class people" (Miller and Reissman, 1961:507-516) There is distinction between

white-collar and blue-collar workers on a broad range of issues including political values and participation, attitude towards marriage, family and child-rearing, leisure time activities, and the like (Gleen and Alston, 1968 365-82)

SIXTH The class convergence theory negated the existence of class-consciousness and class-struggle and coined the concept of 'job-consciousness without recognizing collective awareness of workers. The studies demonstrating class consciousness among workers were criticized (Centers, 1949, Wilensky, 1966 457; Tucker, 1968 508-14, Hodge and Treiman, 1968.535-57). Furthermore, even objective class conflict was said to have sharply diminished (Bell, 1964). Bell — the exponent of celebrated end-of-ideology theory — saw the class-struggle and its ideal manifestations coming to an end. Lipset declared in 1960 that "the fundamental problem of the industrial-revolution has been solved" (Lipset, 1968 73, Rejai, 1971). Some scholars went to the extent of predicting the eventual "withering away" of strike itself (Ross and Hartman, 1960 42-61).

The opponents sharply attacked class convergence theorists for their wilful negation of class consciousness. They argued that there is widespread awareness of inequality, especially since the 'war on poverty'. Polish sociologist Ossowski characterize this ideology, common to both the United States and the USSR as one of "non-egalitarian classlessness" (Ossowski, 1963). Despite the fact that the stratification literature is full of expression of social class, social

distance, and social mobility as manifest in the usage of such terms as high society, upper crusts, higher ups, social climber and so on (Kahl, 1957), it seems strange that class consciousness is negated. Studies conducted by Schneider and Nygreen and Centers attest the fact that there was class consciousness (Schneider and Nygreen, 1970 348-56, Centers, 1949).

SEVENTH It was argued by class convergence theorists that political as well as economic inequalities have been tremendously reduced and citizenship extended to most of the people. The pluralist rather than elitist model of power was supported and the diffusion rather than concentration of political power was stressed. British sociologist, Marshall, argued at length that class-differences in modern world have been progressively diminished by the steady expansion in the number of persons entitled to the rights of full citizenship and by the enrichment of the citizenship itself (Marshall, 1965)

The thesis of citizenship too was challenged by the critics. While accepting the expanding citizenship, they argued that the effects of citizenship has been insufficient enough to warrant abandoning the Marxian insight which holds that there are innumerable ways in which economic power continues to be translated into political power, even in an age of universal citizenship.

In what has gone before we have reviewed the views of those who believe that the poverty was no longer there and the classless society is in offing. How these views are untenable was also demonstrated side by side. Our view is

that the poverty is very much there even amid affluence and it is a myth that the class differences have disappeared. Although our discussion has centred mainly on the Western societies, we are of the opinion that the poverty and inequality is also the characteristics of the U S S R and other socialist societies (Lenski, 1966)

To be sure, the denial of the existence of poverty amid affluence is an old tradition of affluent societies which has led to a tradition of discovery of poverty. It reflects as if the poor are hidden and there is a need to discover them. More than a century ago, Alexis de Toqueville said that Americans have a tendency to deny the existence of upper and lower class.

Let us demonstrate this tendency with the help of examples. In 1840's John Griscom commented on wretchedness of slum-life and said, "One half of the world does not know how the other half lives" (Brenner, 1956 5-6). Henry George in his Progress and Poverty referred to the United States of 1869 as the land where "amid the greatest accumulation of wealth, men die of starvation and puny infants suckle dry breasts". In 1890, Jacob Riis wrote How the Other Half Lives, a reporter's observation and anecdotes on life in the New York slums, which created sensation at the time (Riis, 1890). In his state of the Union Message in 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt referred to "one third of the nation that is ill-clothed, ill-housed, and ill-nourished". Another early discovery of poverty began with the publication of the Wealth of Nations by Adam Smith (1776). He popularized the notion that the poverty was not a

divine gift but rather a human construct and predicted somewhat vaguely that poverty would eventually disappear. Following Adam Smith, Robert Owen proposed that poverty must be eliminated. Saint-Simon outlined the design of the industrial society without pauperism (Heilbronner, 1961). Marx made poverty the central issue in European politics and social philosophy. Examples after examples can be piled but the foregoing are sufficient to show the tendency of denial of poverty and its rediscovery in the affluent societies in the past.

The same feeling of denial of poverty is reflected in several sociologists' recent writings when they argued that social class have disappeared or are disappearing (Rose, 1958 53-69; Nisbet, 1959 11-17; Moore, 1963 14-15, Marshall, 1956, Lichtheim, 1963 198-215; Geiger, 1963 137-58), and that the tendency for societies to merge in one great middle class is underway (Porter, 1965, Zewig, 1961, Wilnesky, 1964 137-58). Galbraith stated that the poor in America have dwindled to two hard core categories "insular poverty" and "case poverty". He reasons that such poverty must be due to individual defects, since "nearly everyone else has mastered his environment, this proves that it is not intractable" (Galbraith, 1958). Its result was that throughout much 1920s and 1930s there was little or no concern with the question of stratification (1940). Again, scholars discovered that there was poverty amid affluence. In the 1960s, economists, such as Gabriel Kolko, Robert J. Lampman and James N. Morgan, exposed some of these assumptions as false (Kolko, 1962, Lampman, 1962,

Morgan et al., 1962, Harrington, 1962, Orant1, 1962, Frazier, 1930) In the admirably short space of under two hundred pages Michael Harrington rediscovers the Other America — heretofore invisible class of the submerged poor (Harrington, 1962) In early sixties Richard Titmuss "rediscovered" poverty in Britain (Titmus, 1962). Miller and Tomaskovic-Devey summed up this tendency

"'The paradox of poverty amid affluence' and the periodic 'rediscovery of poverty' indicate that industrial societies do not understand how poverty is produced and maintained — by the basic processes of production and reproduction. Economic change — the increases in the number of transitions — burdens some people while improving the situations of others or even many. The reduction of certain barriers and cleavages may create new forms of stratification. De-stratification do not permanently prevent re-stratification. Quantity is not quality, the unanticipated and hidden may be the important, class is about inequalities and relationships not level or cardinal scales or even status congruence" (Miller and Tomaskovic-Devey, 1981 272)

## THEORIES OF POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

As against the class convergence theories, there are theories that hold that the poverty and inequality are very much there. There are two explanations which gained popularity in the post-war era. One is the functional theory, and the other is the conflict theory.

### Functional Theory of Poverty and Inequality

In 1945, Davis and Moore published an article in which they prescribed the functional theory of social stratification (Davis and Moore, 1945 242-249). Their central argument is that social inequality is "an unconsciously evolved device

by which societies insure that the most important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons" (Davis and Moore, 1945 243). Stratification system exists because they are necessary for the continued successful operation of society. Davis and Moore further contend that it is possible to specify the factors that determine the relative rank of various positions. They hold that higher rewards are attached to more essential positions to induce individuals to fill them.

For nearly few decades the functional theory of stratification has generated considerable interest and controversy in sociology. So sometimes heated, sometimes critical debate has been carried on by critics with them (Tumin, 1953 387-94, 1953 672-73, 1955 419-23, 1963 19-28; 1967; Wrong, 1959 772, 1960 207-10, 1964 5-16, 1972.278-85, Huaco, 1963 805-8, Stinchcombe and Harris, 1969.12-23). Attempts have been made to deduce and test hypotheses from the theory" (Abrahamson, 1973 1236-46, Grandjean and Bean, 1975 166-80, Land, 1970 474-84; Lupreato and Lewis, 1963 301-10, Stinchcombe, 1963 805-8; Stinchcombe and Harris, 1969 12-23). Let us hope that the ongoing debate would improve the possibility that it might be accepted or rejected on scientific grounds.

### Conflict Theory

Conflict theory has its origin in the works of Marx and has been elaborated by later writers, particularly contemporary neo-Marxists. The adherents of this theory argue that economic and political power resources play a central role

and inequality is viewed as an outcome of the conflict over distribution. Its main argument is that one must understand the logic and biases of social institutions as well as observable behaviours of social classes and individual actors. There is a mutually reinforcing relationship between social institutions and dominant classes. Dominant classes act to preserve those institutions which are the basis of their own hegemony. Institutions shape behaviour of both dominant and subordinate classes and the dominant classes often shape institutions.

Marx distinguished one class from another on the basis of the ownership of means of production and the purchase of the labour power of others. Capitalists own the means of production and purchase labour power and the labourers neither own the means of production nor purchase labour power of others but instead, sell their own labour power. Many neo-Marxists argue that managing directors stand in a similar structural, if not legal, relation to the means of production and share many interests common with the capitalist class (Baran and Sweezy, 1966; Kolko, 1962; Mills, 1957). Lenski has argued that inequality in the distribution of privilege in the society is primarily the result of distribution of power (Lenski, 1966). In Dahrendorf's analysis, classes are distinguished on the basis of their relations to authority in the work place (Dahrendorf, 1959: 166-74). Elsewhere, Dahrendorf explains the origin of social inequality (Dahrendorf, 1968). He holds that inequality always implies the gain of one group on the expense of other; thus every system

of social stratification generates protest against its principles and bears the seeds of its own suppression. For him, the existence of inequality in all human society is to be found in norms of behaviour to which sanctions are attached. Society means that it regulates human conduct. This regulation is guaranteed by the incentives or threat of sanctions. The possibility of imposing sanctions is abstract core of all power. Thus he explains poverty in terms of norm, sanction, and power (Giddens, 1973, Hazelrigg, 1972 473-83, Turner, 1973 236-44, Weingart, 1969 151-65 criticize Dahrendorf).

A variant of the conflict theory and the newest perspective explaining poverty and inequality is the World Systems Perspective. It is extension and modification of classical dependencia thought and earlier theories of imperialism. This perspective views poverty and richness not as two different stages in the history but as integral parts of the same 'world economy'. It is argued that the riches of the rich could not have occurred without the conditioning of the poor from which an economic surplus is extracted (Wallerstein, 1974). Wherever the economic well-being of the poor is visible, it is non-autonomous "induced" development, limited by the interest of the rich (Santos, 1970 231-36).

In the world economy approach, the unity of the world system is stressed. This unity constituted via world economy, which is defined by Wallerstein as a world system with a single division of labour but not overarching state (Wallerstein, 1974 387-415). Rather, the world economies, particularly

the modern capitalist world economy, are politically organized as a system of competing and unequally powerful states. The dominant position in the world economy is seen as beneficial to core as a whole. Currently the dependent industrialization is seen as a cause of relative stagnation in the long run (Cardoso, 1973)

For Frank, the real problem is not that of development and underdevelopment, but of 'development of underdevelopment' (Frank, 1966 17-31), that is, of exploiter and exploited. He analyzed the problem of dependence with the help of a chain of exploitative relations and extraction and transmission of surplus through a series of metropolis-satellite links. The metropolis-satellite link operates both at global and culturally specific societal levels. At the world-widescale, the relationship between the developed west and underdeveloped rest is a relationship between the metropolis and satellite. The same metropolis and satellite relationship can be seen at the level of specific societies as well as in the relationship between relatively advanced capital city and the oppressed and backward hinterland. Frank further extended the application of the exploitative relation of the metropolis-satellite type to the sphere of class, he considered the relationship between landowner and peasant as a form of satellite tie although he could not get time to present in detail.

This perspective has triggered a debate that has taken two directions, one theoretical (Gereffi, 1979) and the other empirical (Dolan and Tomlin, 1980 41-63; Weede and Tiefenbach, 1981; Warren, 1973 3-44).

Our view is that the two theories -- functional and conflict -- are complementary, together making up a whole. We agree with Dahrendorf who writes "there are sociological problems for the explanation of which the integration theory of society provides adequate assumptions, there are other problems which can be explained only in terms of the coercion theory of society, there are, finally, problems for which both theories <sup>appear</sup> adequate. For sociological analysis, society is Janus-headed, and its two faces are equivalent aspects of the same reality" (Dahrendorf, 1959 159).

#### ISSUE OF ABOLITION OF POVERTY

There are two contrasting views regarding whether poverty and inequality can be abolished altogether. On the one side are those who feel that social inequality can be eliminated and on the other side are those who feel it cannot be.

Those who feel that poverty can be eliminated put forward two main arguments in their favour. First, that the social inequality is a historical phenomenon. Since there was once a period of inequality, the elimination of inequality is conceivable. Rousseau and his followers belong to this category. Secondly, the Marxists maintained that since economic factor is the sole cause of poverty and inequality, it would vanish if private ownership from the means of production is abolished.

By contrast, those who adopt opposite view, feel that inequality is ineluctable. Dahrendorf argues that if it is true that inequality among men follow from the very concept

of society as a moral community, then there cannot be a society of absolute equals. Functionalists too feel that it cannot be abolished but on different grounds. Parsons, Moore and Davis, saw inequality as a functional necessity of all human society. To them, the inequality is indispensable for the maintenance of any social structure of any time and it is impossible to eliminate inequality from the society. Schumpeter further argued that inequality would persist because it is caused by unequal talents of individuals and the rise and the fall of families (Schumpeter, 1943).

We feel that since inequality and poverty is socially created, it may be abolished by the society.

In what has gone before, an attempt was made to explain the nature of poverty. At the start, a brief sketch of the problems of the study was presented. The main objectives set for the study are (1) to pay attention to the conceptualization of poverty, (2) to find out the relationship between social structure and poverty, (3) to understand the generation of poverty, (4) to compare the rural and urban poverty, and (5) to bring out the perception of the poverty by the poor themselves. Before proceeding, it was thought proper to present the nature of poverty.

The meaning of 'poverty' was explained from absolute and relative standpoints. In our view these are not two different definitions, but rather two different aspects of the definition of poverty.

Two approaches are generally employed to discern the components or dimensions of poverty: single variable approach

and multi-variate approach Our view is that the real meaning of poverty can be captured from the multi-variate approach.

In this study the following components form the vector of poverty (1) Occupation and unemployment, (2) Income and assets, (3) Food consumption, (4) Health, (5) Shelter, (6) Education, (7) Politics and power, (8) Demographic characteristics, and (9) Values, interest and activities

The types of poverty and its changing nature show that there are variable degrees of poverty and each <sup>generation,</sup> ~~for~~ the same reason, sees it differently. There can be no uniform definition of poverty, for the structure of poverty and its implications for the poor have changed overtime and space

Two differing ideologies maintain and perpetuate poverty one is individualistic and the other is societal. Both these views denied that the poverty could be the legitimate subject of the public policy and that the state can do nothing to aid poor nor should it try

Contemporary theories explaining poverty and inequality are of two types Class convergence theory denying the existence of poverty and inequality and class-stability theory acknowledging the continuity of them. Class stability theories are of two types functional and conflict theory. Our view is that both these theories are complementary, together making up a whole. In some sociological problems, only functional theory fits, in others only conflict theory is adequate, and in still others both theories appear adequate.

Scholars are divided into two camps on the question of elimination of poverty and inequality. Some feel that poverty and inequality cannot be abolished and others feel that it may be. Our stand is that the structured poverty and inequality may be abolished.

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## CHAPTER TWO

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### THE DESIGN AND THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Some introductory theoretical<sup>1</sup> perspective on the nature of poverty was provided in the preceding chapter. What is so striking about the theoretical assumptions is that there is paucity of data that would enable a reasonable judgement to be made about their veracity. The main purpose of this inquiry is to test the validity of some of the assumptions by examining the observable effects of poverty on the people in rural and urban areas. With this chapter our attention turns to the empirical aspect of the study. Here the main focus will be on the following.

- (1) the problem of poverty in India,
- (2) the formulation of the problem,
- (3) the nature and quality of materials available, and
- (4) the methodology.

### THE PROBLEM OF POVERTY IN INDIA

Until independence, India was exploited to the maximum by the foreign rulers (For a brief account of India's exploitation by foreign rulers, see Kumarappa, 1930; Dutt, 1955; Desai, 1959; Nehru, 1946; Singh, 1964; Alavi, 1975; Frank, 1978; 1979). Naturally, therefore, when the country gained independence, it inherited inter alia poverty in legacy. One of the main tasks before the vanguards of the nation during

the post-independence era was to remove poverty and attendant misery of the masses and reconstruct the economic structure (one is tempted hereto employ the Marxist term "infrastructure") of the society

The first thirty-six years of independence were devoted to the socio-economic uplift of the country. All efforts were made to translate the ideals of independence laid down by Mahatma Gandhi — the Father of the Nation — into reality. Gandhi said

" the main objective is obvious and it is to gain independence, not for the literate and the rich in India, but for the dumb millions

I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose making they have an effective voice, and India in which there shall be no high class and low class people" (Gandhi, 1947-6).

But even after over three decades and a half of assiduous talk of development and six Five-Year Plans, one finds a deepening economic crisis. The wisdom of hindsight has now made it clear that the plans had an elite bias. Those who lead the way and anticipate progress were affected by various misconceptions about the economic growth that took place. Higher GNP was wrongly equated with development, and some superficial attributes of the affluent West acquired to fulfil the needs, aspirations and ambitions of the elite, was wrongly equated with the common welfare. In the process, a large section of countrymen suffered callous neglect. The 'dumb millions' of Gandhi, for whom he wanted to gain independence, remained in the background

The problems of poverty in India are immense. The poverty line continues to receive a new definition every quarter in order to prove that there has been no increase in the number of poor people and thereby to project an "improved" image of the country (Mody, 1982). Even then the various estimates of poverty present a dismal reading. Defining the "poverty-line" in terms of either a minimum monthly per capita expenditure of Rs. 15 to 20 (at 1960-61 prices) or of a minimum calory requirement of 2,250 units, Ojha (1970 16-27), Bardhan (1970 129-36), and Dandekar and Rath (1971 25-48 and 106-46) find poverty either on increase or constant at the high level. In 1960-61, says Ojha, the poor constituted 51.8 per cent of the rural population, in 1967-68 this rose to 70 per cent. Bardhan's estimates of the rural poor are 38 per cent in 1960-61, 44.6 per cent in 1967-68. Dandekar and Rath strike a slightly more encouraging note. According to them, poverty in the rural and urban areas has been constant over years with 40 per cent of the rural population and 50 per cent of the urban population remaining below the poverty line. However, the superficial examination of survey estimates in the distribution of consumer expenditures manifests that differences have narrowed down, but a more thorough examination of the same figures shows that gaps between the rich and the poor would widen "intolerably", and that such a narrowing down, in fact, has not occurred. Minhas (1970 97-128) estimates some decline in rural poverty from 52.4 per cent in 1956-57 to 46 per cent in 1960-61 to 39.3 per cent in 1964-65 to 37.1 per cent in 1967-68. Whether one accepts the optimistic or pessimistic estimates,

the fact remains that the country has an enormous problem in the dimension of its rural and urban poverty.

The majority of India's population (76.27 per cent) lives in rural areas. A large number of the total population of India lives below the poverty line (48.1 per cent), of which are 50.8 per cent rural and 18.2 per cent urban (Mukerjee, 1981: 3-4). The plans that were made to ameliorate the conditions of the poor are said to have urban bias (Lipton, 1975, 1976, Harriss, 1980: 33-64). India's latest plan explicitly recognises that aggregate economic growth, concentrated largely within urban centres, has not filtered down to the majority of either urban or rural poor and asserts "growthmanship which results in undivided attention to the maximization of GNP can be dangerous. Elimination of abject poverty will not be attained as a corollary to a certain acceleration in the growth of the economy alone" (Das, 1973). India contains a large number of "ultra-poor" people and has raised real income per person relatively slowly" (Kuznets, 1972). Although Indian average real income is, at least, 40 per cent higher than in 1950 (Pandey, 1975), while the India's poor are scarcely less poor (Minhas, 1974).

The problems of the urban poor living in the slums and elsewhere are also severe. The populations of India's slum often live in appalling physical situations, sub-standard incomes, insufficient medical care, inadequate sanitation, often extremely poor access to public utilities and malnutrition (Ramchandra, 1970: 167).

To be sure, poverty is more prevalent, comparatively speaking, in rural than in urban India. Although rural slums are less dramatic and less visible as compared to the condition of urban slums, nevertheless they are inhabited by millions of Indians, including large number of children and youths. Being a rural resident, 'Scheduled Caste' and 'Scheduled Tribe' increase the risk of being poor.

It must be borne in mind that levels of income and calorie in-take do not tell the whole story of the poverty. Social characteristics of the population better explain poverty.

First, education levels of rural residents still lag far behind those of city dwellers. In 1971, 34.1 per cent of total population was literate, of which 27.2 per cent were rural and 60.0 per cent urban (Natrajan, 1978). Studies conducted elsewhere indicate that among those who attend college, students from rural schools are less well prepared than those from urban schools. Under-achievement in college is also found to have link with rural background (Fliegler and Bish, 1959 408-50; Folkman, 1962). School dropout rates are also substantially different of rural and urban dwellers. Considerably greater proportion of urban than rural youth continue their education (Nam and Cowhig, 1962 27).

In addition to differences in education, sharp rural-urban differences exist in the quality of housing. The rural dwellings lack the civil amenities of urban dwellings. Also, a comparatively higher proportion of rural than

urban housing units are deteriorated and dilapidated

With inadequate resources in their houses, rural families struggle to raise more children than urban. Correspondingly, rural families have remained larger than those of the urban families

In so far as the standard of health is concerned, there is greater ill-health among <sup>the</sup> rural than <sup>the</sup> urban. Rural residents not only suffer more frequently from illness, but they also less frequently go in for medical aid and have lower expenditure for medical services

According to the 1971 census, life expectancy at age one was 42.6 years. Whereas urban dwellers were expected to live for 59 years, rural dwellers only for 38.5 years. Also, the infant mortality rate (per thousand live birth) was 134 for all India, of which 144 was for rural and 85 for urban (Morris and McAlpin, 1982: 94)

Besides these, there are some other salient characteristics of rural population which differ from the urban. The urban population is gradually increasing and rural population shrinking. Whereas 85.90 per cent population lived in rural areas in the year 1941, it is now 76.27 per cent in 1981 (Padmanabha, 1981).

Occupationally, the rural population is predominantly a farm population. However, with the technological changes and emergence of variations in occupations, relatively less rural residents now rely on farm activities. Continued monopolization of farm by the few and increased efficiency of

production combined to reduce the demand of agricultural worker per year. The decline in dependency in rural work is also demonstrated by the non-farm employment among farm residents.

Due to demographic transition and changes in employment in rural life, there is out-migration and internal redistribution of rural population. Out-migration is typical of most rural communities and it runs into large figures. The increasing birth rate of the rural people is not likely to be absorbed into the rural labour force. Most migrate to urban areas either from choice or necessities. Many also move from one region of the country to another. Poverty is nowhere so stark and the rewards of labour so meager as among migrant agricultural labourers and their families. Labour migration drains rural areas of their potentially most productive workers who leave behind the old, infirm, women, and children to lives of worsening impoverishment. Moreover, migrant workers tend to "make less use of what social capital is available in rural areas. Poorly housed, fed at the whim of their employers and continually on the move. . . , they lack the incentive, time or energy to exploit the social infrastructure". As Elliott dramatically points out, "they have no contract of employment, no formal channels of setting disputes, no insurance against sickness or injury, no minimum wage, and no redress against unjust employer. Separated from kin and living on a precarious and insecure income, they are the least enviable of men" (Elliott, 1975 129). The

empirical findings attest the fact that rural reared youth in general, and those reared in depressed communities in particular, are at disadvantage relative to urban reared youth in competition for jobs in urban labour market, and the condition is very poor" (Burchinal, Haller and Taves, 1962, Burchinal and Cowhig, 1963 167-72).

#### FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

This inquiry aims to analyse the structural context of the rural and urban poverty in India. As pinpointed earlier, despite efforts made to remove the poverty of the people and raise their living standard, poverty is still widespread in the country. A study of the rural and urban poverty will provide both a comparative and comprehensive picture of poverty as well as an important clue to the understanding of how the poor see themselves, to their lives, and their roles in the society. It will also reflect on whether the poor are improving their conditions and accepting the ideals of the society in the making or they are still clinging to the subcultures of poverty and holding fast to the ideals and values of the passing society.

The real objective of the Five-Year Plans is to mitigate the misery of the masses and establish a society based on modern egalitarian values such as equality, liberty, fraternity, and justice. Our Constitution has abolished distinction between man and man based on caste, creed, colour, and sex. It has made mandatory that there be reservation of jobs for the poor, particularly to those belonging to the Scheduled Caste

and Scheduled Tribe, in order to bring them at par with the rest of the society. However, this is only part of the reality of the contemporary Indian situation. Recent studies have revealed interesting facts, the gap between the rich and the poor is widening. It will be unrealistic to conclude that poverty is a matter of the past now. Side by side, other traditional bases of stratification, such as caste, and sex are still persisting.

Despite the fact that rural and urban areas share common socio-cultural characteristics and are almost continuous with each other, the urban areas distinguish themselves from the rural in a number of ways. For instance, rural and urban areas have their distinct ecological settings, they also differ in respect of their occupational structure, demographic base, styles-of-life, and cultural traits. In spite of all the changes brought about by the modern processes of industrialization and urbanization, the rural society still continues to be a stronghold of tradition. On the other hand, the growing urbanization has brought tremendous transformations in the life of urban dwellers. The perspective of the rural poor is, therefore, bound to differ from the perspective of the urban poor. Rural-urban difference is, thus, a major variable selected for this investigation. The main hypothesis in this inquiry is that the structural background of the rural and urban areas does make a difference between the urges, aspirations and values, and the ways of organizing the lives and relating to the environments.

## Objectives of the Study

This study has a three-fold objectives (1) to explore the components of rural and urban poverty, (2) to form an appreciation of the contribution of each of its components to life-styles, to happiness and misery, and (3) to see how each element of poverty is generated

### (1) Components of Rural and Urban Poverty

At the outset it has been mentioned that the poverty and inequality are complex phenomena, they cannot be captured fully by any single measure. Differently put, poverty has a multivariate nature for which a single variate approach is inadequate. Hence we felt that a set of measures is necessary to define and analyse poverty. So we decided to explore poverty with the help of a vector of components<sup>1</sup>. As will be evident in the analysis in sequel, some of these components are quantifiable while others can be treated qualitatively only.

The components that constitute the vector of poverty have been chosen in terms of satisfaction and deprivation.

<sup>1</sup>"In physics and geometry we have to deal with two types of quantities, called Scalars and Vectors. A quantity which possesses magnitude but is not related to any direction in space is called a scalar quantity, or briefly, a scalar. Mass, volume, temperature, potential, etc., are examples of scalar quantities. A scalar quantity can be completely represented by specifying its magnitude as a multiple of a unit quantity of the same type.

A quantity which possesses magnitude and also a direction in space is called a vector quantity, or briefly, a vector. Force, velocity, acceleration, angular momentum, etc., are example of vector quantities" (See Srivastava, 1980, I 122).

In all we have culled nine components of poverty (i) Occupation and unemployment, (ii) Income and asset, (iii) Food, (iv) Shelter, (v) Health, (vi) Education, (vii) Demographic features, (viii) Values, interests and activities, and (ix) Power and politics. Each of these elements forms a vector component of poverty (see Diagram 2.1) and contributes to the life-styles and to happiness and misery. Each of these components affects

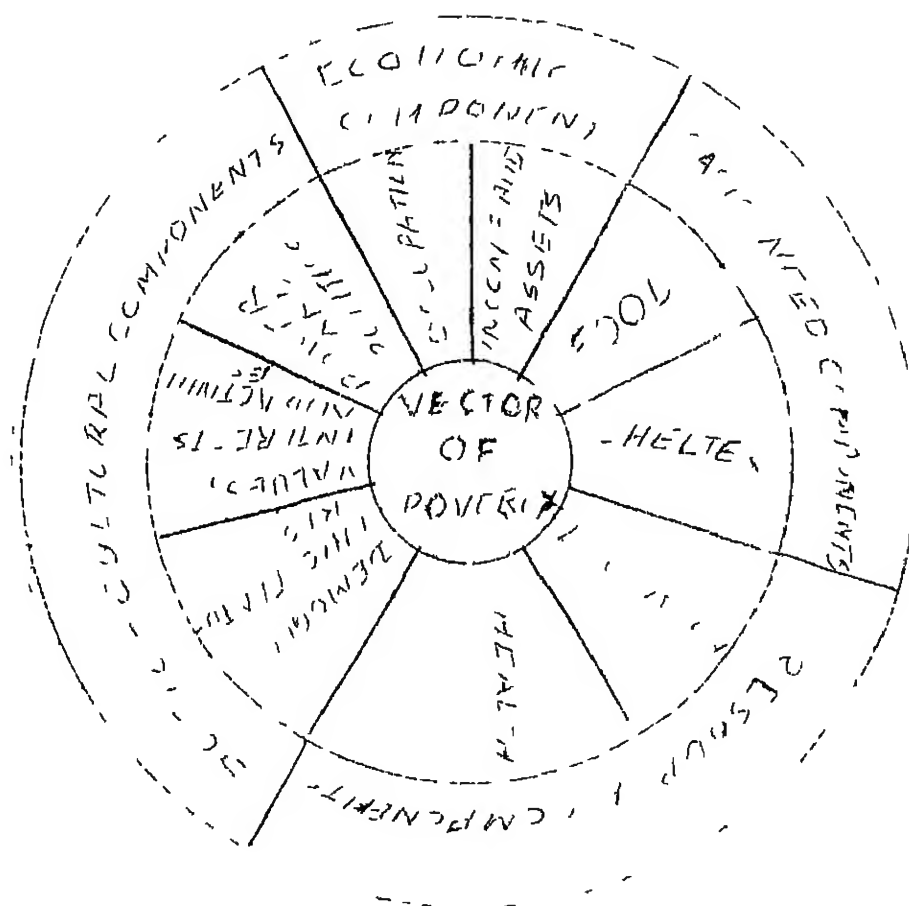


Diagram 2.1

Components of the Vector of Poverty

each other and thereby perpetuates the system of poverty  
The specific contents of each of the component that constitute  
the vector of poverty, which this study aims to explore are

## 1 Occupation

(1) Occupation. To find out the kind of occupation  
the poor are engaged in and its tenure, reasons for choosing  
and the way of entry to this occupation, occupational mobility,  
and the level of satisfaction with the work

(11) Unemployment To ascertain the extent of unempl-  
oyment among educated and uneducated members and number of  
earners in the poor's family.

## 2. Income and Assets

(1) Income To find out the income of the poor from  
all sources together with the flow of income in terms of  
constancy and irregularity as well as reasons assigned by  
them for their inadequate income

(11) Land holding To ascertain the ownership of land  
and pattern of its distribution

(111) Livestock To know about animals kept or raised  
by the poor, reasons for upkeeping them, and monthly gains  
and expenses.

(iv) Capital accumulation To learn the poor's  
savings and the sources through which they save

(v) Indebtedness To find out the extent of the poor's  
indebtedness, purposes for which they raise loans, and mode of  
repayment.

### 3. Food Consumption

To find out types and quantity of food they consume, reasons for the kind of food they consume, and expenditures involved on the food consumption.

### 4. Health

(i) Treatment To learn the poor's pattern of treatment, including the kind of hospitals and medicines

(ii) Preventive measures To know the preventive measures adopted by the poor to arrest the spread of diseases

(iii) Sanitation To understand the sanitary conditions of their houses and localities

(iv) Visits of medical officials: To find out whether the localities where the poor live are visited by the medical officials

### 5. Shelter

(i) Ownership of house and its nature To ascertain the kind of house the poor own with special reference to the availability of rooms, the purpose for which rooms are used, and the number of persons live in them.

(ii) Basic civic amenities. To know the provisions for windows and doors, drinking water, lavatory, and light facilities in the poor's houses

(iii) Material possession To find out various household items in terms of furniture, means of entertainment, vehicles, and utensils.

## 6 Education

(1) Level of education To find out the level of education of the respondents together with reasons for not getting further education, as well as the level and type of schooling of their children

(11) Women's education To ascertain the poor's views towards women's education

## 7 Demographic Features

(1) The nature of the family To find out nature of the poor's family in terms of its size and their preferences for a specific type of family and attitude towards joint family, and the kind of familial relationship

(11) Marital status To understand the marital status of the respondents and their attitudes towards marriage

(111) Divorce and widow remarriage To find out the frequency of, and reasons for, divorce, agencies which effect divorce, and permissibility and practice of widow remarriage

(iv) Migration To find out the place of origin, frequency of, and reasons for, migration, family members who migrated along with them, place of shelter just after immigration, nature of their stay in the city and reasons for choosing this city, and frequency of visit to the native place

## 8. Values, Interests and Activities

(1) Religiosity To find out the religiosity among the poor in terms of ritualistic, intellectual, belief, and good work dimensions.

(ii) Class-prejudice To find out the poor's attitude towards the nonpoor in terms of education, behaviour, intelligence, and other facilities.

(iii) Modern orientations To find out modern orientation of the poor in terms of their readiness to accept innovations and adoption of scientific views in their life

## 9 Power and Politics

### (I) Political participation

(1) Political affiliation To find out the affiliation of the poor with political parties and their mode of political participation

(II) Organizational participation To find out the poor's organizational participation in terms of labour unions, and other associations as well as their interest in national political affairs

(III) Perception of government To understand the poor's perception of a good government

(IV) Perception of leader To learn about poor's perception of qualities of a leader and criteria for electing a leader of their choice.

### (2) Contribution of the Components of Poverty

After discerning the components that form the vector of poverty, our objective is to have an appreciation of how various components contribute into making of each other and determining the life-style of the poor Attempts shall be

made to understand how different features of social structure and poverty interact together

### (3) Generation of Poverty

This inquiry is premised on the assumption that the components of poverty are interrelated and interact with each other. Let us expand this point.

Occupation refers to the involvement of the poor in the production process. Individual's work is related to his class, participation in, and control over, decision, and assets. If the poor tend to be a wage labourer or small peasant or otherwise self-employed, they are likely to have few complementary assets. Their income would depend on wages, on the mode of wage payment, and the extent of unemployment; and all of them, in turn, depend on their productivity. Other components of poverty provide a feedback to these processes. The level of consumption, or poor health, or less education can adversely affect productivity and thereby generate low income. Low incomes force individuals in a certain type of labour market behaviour often leading to low wages.

Assets refer to an income source and the means of production. The only important means of production poor have in villages is the land and some associated farm animals. The ownership of land, its distribution and its dynamics affect the life of poor. Unequal access to land is a rule and a fundamental determinant of rural poverty. Such factors as inheritance, savings, indebtedness, and technology are all relevant. The savings of the poor are negligible, frequently

increasing indebtedness and end in the loss of any assets possessed. Thus negative assets holding characterizes the poor.

Income, ways in which income is received, prices, preferences, assets, health, occupation, and other competing demands on income, all together determine the food consumption

Capital accumulation is an important dynamic mechanism for the transmission of poverty. Saving rates among the poor are low or even negative. So the capital accumulation blocks the income mobility for the poor. These are mechanisms which tend to generate asset decumulation, loss of land, and increasing indebtedness.

Health is the consequence of consumption level, occupation, conditions of work, availability of medical services, sanitation, water supply, other ecological factors, prevalence of certain diseases and their carriers, education, and cultural factors

Shelter provides security from physical hazards, on it depends health, style-of-life, and one's status in the society

Education refers to the question of 'human capital' in terms of education, skills, and abilities. Low education leads to poor job access, low income, lack of skill development, and low education levels in the next generation. Low status of the poor is likely to limit access to education and low level of education tends to generate low status. The educated unemployed coming from the poor families are deprived from finding out a work suited to their education.

Demographic features have also direct bearing on poverty. On the one hand, if children feel obliged to support their parents, then it has impact over fertility as children ensure labour supply. The poorer's families, then, are bound to be large. The children lead to security of the poor in future. On the other hand, large family size has adverse effects if earning opportunity is limited. The marriage, fertility, and mortality have impact over labour supply, consumption decision, and other aspects of household behaviour. Asset accumulation is also related to these factors. The child-bearing will be substitution of labour reproduction for capital accumulation. The nature of the family and the relationship between members are significant for the poverty. More population means less per capita income. Having more children may not at all be reason of poverty but it does have impact over life cycle and leads to deprivation. Thus inability to control family size can be regarded as components of poverty.

Poverty is associated with powerlessness. Employment, production, and assets all depend on the political control or other aspect of power. The inability of the poor to control over the means of production and the inability to influence the policy decision affects their life-styles and capacity to oppose the interest group. There are various sources of power-political, social and economic — which affect poverty. For instance, the ownership of assets generates power to have control over income opportunities and it may also lead to have bonded labour through the obligations related with

indebtedness Political power operates through the control of administration or police or public resources Those who control the polity are usually rewarded So the low status is the source of powerlessness Low costs lowers the social status further which, in turn, deprives its members of social opportunities

Socio-cultural factors have impact over poverty The adherence to the social custom leads to the indebtedness, over expenditure and attendant misery. The social prejudices affect the attitude and behaviour of the poor resulting in their isolation from the society The orientations towards tradition at times affects their orientation towards modernization leading to retardation

### HYPOTHESES

Our major hypothesis is that the rural and urban poverty differ from each other in relation to different components that form the vector of poverty. The specific hypotheses of the study are as follows

- 1 The rural poor are likely to have less income and asset than that of their urban counterparts
- 2 The rural poor tend to have less occupational opportunities as compared to the urban poor
3. The rural poor tend to consume food with less nutritional element than those of the urban poor
4. More urban than rural poor are likely to use and have access to the scientific medicinal facilities

- 5 The problem of shelter is likely to be more acute for the urban poor as compared to their rural counterpart
6. The rural poor tend to be less educated than that of the urban poor
7. The urban poor are likely to be more involved in political activities than the rural poor
- 8 The nuclear family is likely to be familial norm of the urban poor while joint families of the rural poor
- 9 More urban are likely to be oriented towards modern values than the rural poor

#### THE NATURE AND QUALITY OF MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Less attempts have been made and very little is known about the poor section of the population everywhere, but the developing part of the world suffer a great deal from the scant literature on poverty.

The poverty, and economy for that matter, in any country has two different pockets -- rural and urban. But the relationship between these two economies have been viewed in two different ways. One approach to the modernization theory describes traditional (rural) and modern (urban) sectors as separate economies (Dalton, 1971, Boeke, 1942, 1953, Belshaw, 1965). As against this, the dependency theory describes linkages between the village and the larger society and views the relationship between them through the metaphor of internal colonialism (Porter, 1976:55-85, Portes and Walton, 1976, Hechter, 1975; Davis, 1971:6-32). The economic inequality, it argues, results from uneven development and the dependence

of the hinterland on the metropolis (Frank, 1966 17-31, Amin, 1976) It explains national and international inequality as inherent to the world capitalist system (Frank, 1967 1-67, Santos, 1973 231-236, Wallerstein, 1974) In a capitalist system, integration with national systems increases the village community's dependence upon the wider society (Snipp and Summers, 1980) which, in turn, produces higher levels of inequality within the village community (Frank, 1966, Chilcotte and Edelstein, 1980)

In spite of the massive development efforts of the past thirty-six years and important progress in agriculture, science and technology, and many other fronts, village India remains engulfed in poverty and prejudice, at the same time many metropolitan centres are degenerating into suppurating slums (Datta, Choudhary and Narain, 1975 1227-29, Bhatia, 1970; Ojha, 1970 16-27, Bardhan, 1970 129-136, Dandekar and Rath, 1971 25-48, Minhas, 1970 97-129, Fonseca, 1971, Myrdal, 1968, 1970).

In the vast and ever-growing literature on village India (among early studies are Opler and Singh, 1948 464-496; Marriott, 1952 145-155, 1955, Karim, 1956, Dube, 1955, 1958, Leach, 1958, Chattopadhyay, 1959, Orans, 1959 216-239, Rao, 1959, Desai, 1960. Somewhat recent studies are Shils, 1961, Epstein, 1962, Basu, 1962, Beals, 1962 92-96, Chattopadhyay, 1964, Mathur, 1964, Wiser and Wiser, 1964, Aiyappan, 1965, Goswami, 1967, Ishwaran, 1968, Srinivas et al , 1969 Most recent studies are Rao, Majumdar and Ray, 1975, Narain, 1976, Srinivas et al., 1977, Dube, 1977, Mukherjee, 1971, Sharma,

1979, Rao, 1980, Nanjundappa, 1981, Rao, 1981, Khan, 1981) reflections on the rural poverty are few and far between. That is to say, rural poverty per se has remained neglected despite the fact that over four-fifths of India's population is rural spread over more than half a million villages and almost 70 per cent of India's labour force is still employed in agriculture — a figure which has changed little over the century<sup>2</sup> Of late, scholars have paid attention to the problem of rural poverty (Singh, 1969, Pant, 1960, Naoroji, 1962, Siva Raman, 1969, Minhas, 1974, 1970, 1971, 1971, Bardhan, 1971, Rodgers, 1972, Rodgers, 1973, Narayanan, 1978, Sarkar, 1973, 1978, World Bank, 1978, Raj, 1977, Kamble, 1979, Gondhia, 1980, Saith, 1980)

Recent studies have shown that the extremely low real income levels of small farm households have risen very slowly and in some cases may have even declined (Rajaraman, 1975 279-290). Attempts at supplying small farmers with credit at subsidized interest rates in India, for example, have had only limited success because existing political structures have enabled large landowners to capture the benefits in spite

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<sup>2</sup> Indian Census figures show that among all rural male workers, cultivators decreased from 61.1 per cent to 56 per cent in 1971. Even sharper changes were observed for females. The proportion of female cultivators fell from 58.9 per cent in 1961 to 32.7 per cent in 1971 and agricultural labourers increased from 24.8 per cent to 54.3 per cent. Changes in inequality are only crudely reflected in these differences, since not all cultivators are owners and wealth and incomes vary within categories (particularly for cultivators). These changes might also result in part from the recruitment of labour by a more productive and expanded agriculture

of the intent of programmes (Mellor, 1976) Numerous studies in India document the inverse relationship between productivity and farm size, smaller farms produce more per hectare than larger farms (Majumdar, 1965.161-173) Also there is a strong negative relationship between crop receipts per hectare and farm size even when the multiple cropping index is held constant (Bardhan, 1973) Despite a rhetoric of equality, government's land and tenure reforms, taxation policies, and development expenditure were, at best, ineffectively applied to such ends (Lipton, 1968 83-148, Moore, 1966, Myrdal, 1968) Elites easily blunted the redistributive programmes to reap the benefits from rural development programmes (Frankel, 1971, Parthasarathy and Prasad, 1974 182-198, Griffin, 1974, Gartrell, 1977 318-337, Weeks, 1970 28-36, Scott, 1976, Berreman, 1963 90-94, Lewis, 1964 170-187, 1958) Not surprising that the following hypotheses have been found correct (1) Higher community development of resources will be associated with higher levels of inequality within the village (Dasgupta, 1975 1395-1414, Epstein, 1973, Myrdal, 1968), (2) Given the conditions of capitalist production, the greater the surplus generated within the community, the greater the inequality in its distribution (Sharma, 1978, Stanfield and Whiting, 1972 401-416, Moore, 1966; Maddison, 1971), and (3) Greater penetration of the village by the wider (capitalist) society would result in greater inequality within the village community (Sharma, 1978)

Of late, scholars — native and foreign — have shown interest in the study of cities — small and large (Ranson,

1960, Majumdar, 1960; Sen, 1960, Bopegamage, 1957, Venkata-rayappa, 1957, Malkani, 1958, Gadgil, 1952, Iyenger, 1957, Trivedi, 1961, Mukherjee and Singh, 1965, Rao and Desai, 1965, D'Souza, 1960, Bose, 1965, 1968, Mody and Khatre, 1975, Sen, 1975, Singh, 1955, Chauhan, 1966, Bose, 1973, 1977, Singh, 1972, Institute for Economic Growth, 1980; Badami, 1976, Pant, 1979) Among the various aspects of urban life, poverty and the slums have attracted the attention of a great many scholars (Patwardhan, 1960, Sukhatme, 1963, Madalga, 1968, Dandekar and Rath, 1971, Fonseca, 1971, Minhas, 1971; Joshi, 1971, Sinha, 1971, Hicks, 1971, Costa, 1971, Myrdal, 1968, Majumdar, 1977, Sethuraman, 1977, Rao, 1978, D'Souza, 1980, Kulkarni, 1980, Singh, 1980; Chopra, 1981, Gupta, 1981, Rao and Vivekanand, 1982, Anderson, 1960, B S S., 1958, Govt. of India, 1959, Gadgil, 1959, Desai, 1957, Nambiar, 1961, 1965, Clindard, 1966, Siddiqui, 1968, Karkal, 1970, Desai and Pillai, 1970, Ramachandran, 1970, Desai and Pillai, 1972, Wiebe, 1973, Gopijkar, 1975, Unni, 1977, Wieber, 1977, D'Souza, 1978, Chaudhuari, 1976, Dayal, 1975, Khatu, 1973a, 1973b, 1976, Banerjee, 1974, Shah, 1975, Sadhu, 1975, Prasad Rao, 1975, Kusumakar, 1975, Rangannal, 1971, T N Slum Clearance Board, 1976, Siva Ramkrishna, 1977, Ghosh, 1977) Important aspect of the slums that have received a major attention, among others, are housing problems, (Achwal, 1972, Bhatt, 1972, Ramachandra, 1972, Rao, 1972, 1973, Unni, 1974, Chandramouli, 1975, TCP0, 1975, D'Souza, 1976, Sengupta, 1975, Srivastava, 1977, Gandotra, 1976), demographic features (Bose, 1974, Vibhooti, 1975, Desai and Pillai,

1970, 1972, Khatu, 1976a, 1976b, Arangamal, 1976, Gandotra, 1976), migrants (Khatu, 1976, Rao and Desai, 1965, Singh, 1976, Sen, 1960; Lubell, 1977, Lynch, 1974, Mukherjee, 1975, Bhatt and Chawla, 1972, D'Souza, 1968, Upreti, 1981, Singh, 1978), social organisation (Mukherjee, 1975, Singh, 1977, Cohn, 1975, D'Souza, 1975, Desai and Pillai, 1972, Ahmed, 1975), and health (Desai and Pillai, 1972, Wiebe, 1975, Apte, 1971)

Whatever the researches are, they show very little or no concern with the vital questions, viz , what constitutes the rural and urban poverty? How do the two pockets of poverty — rural and urban — differ from each other? What aspects of the social structure in a transitional society may be said to be determining the poverty and shaping the poor's perceptions? How the poverty is generated and how the components of poverty interact with one another? Not only this that the studies of the past neglect these significant issues, they are basically descriptive, qualitative and based on elementary quantitative data. And, all this limits their scope in so far as predictive value is concerned and also they cannot be utilized for making broader generalizations. A study like the present one fulfills the need of a systematic study of this type and assumes added significance, chiefly because it attempts to provide an empirical explanation of explanatory factors, it tries to verify statistically the systematic relationship between some of the sociologically significant divisions of social structure and poverty and empirically examines the relations between various components of poverty

## CONCEPT DEFINED

### Slum

The nature of poverty has already been explained in the previous chapter. Here we would try to explain the concept of slum — urban and rural.

Opinions differ on the meaning of a 'slum'. As are varieties of 'slum', so are its different definitions. Some regard 'slum' as a special type of disorganized area (Gift and Halbert, 1950 162-163) and others treat the terms 'slum' and 'blighted area' as synonymous (Queen and Thomas, 1939). Still others draw a distinction between the two 'blighted area' referring to both residential and non-residential sections, and 'slum' only to residential areas.

The dictionary describes the slum as a "street, alley, court, etc., situated in a crowded district of a town or city and inhabited by people of a low class or by the very poor, a number of these streets or courts forming a thickly populated neighbourhood or district of a squalid and wretched character" (Oxford Dictionary, 1955 1921).

According to a report on urban land policies by United Nations,

"A slum is a building, a group of buildings, or area characterized by overcrowding, deterioration, unsanitary conditions, or absence of facilities or amenities which, because of these conditions or any of them, endanger the health, safety or morals of its inhabitants" (Anderson, 1952 191).

In a more restricted sense,

"Slums may be characterized as areas of sub-standard housing condition within a city. A

slum is always an area. A single, neglected building, even in the worst stage of deterioration, does not make a slum" (Bergel, 1955 410)

In a similar vein, Clinard defines slums as "those portions of cities in which housing is crowded, neglected, deteriorated, and often obsolete" (Clinard, 1966 4)

The Indian slum is in most cases entirely different from those of the Western slums. So the definitions of a slum employed officially also differ. Bharat Sevak Samaj defined slum as follows

"The term 'slum' should be applied to those parts of the city which may be considered unfit for human habitation either because the structures therein are old, dilapidated, grossly congested and out of repairs, or because it is impossible to preserve sanitation for want of sanitary facilities including ventilation, drainage, water supply, etc., or because the sites, by themselves, are unhealthy" (Bharat Sevak Samaj, 1958)

It is needless to pile definitions after definitions, the meaning of slum would become clear if we look at the common characteristics of slums. We consider a place to be a slum which has following characteristics (1) neglected and deteriorated housing conditions, (2) overcrowding and congestion, (3) population consisting of the aged, the chronically sick, the homeless, and the socially maladjusted, (4) lowest income group inhabitants, (5) low standards of sanitation and an area of high sickness and death rates, (6) lack of neighbourhood facilities, (7) deviant behaviour, (8) residential area with apathy and social isolation, (9) the culture of poverty, and (10) high residential mobility (cf. Anderson, 1960; Clinard, 1966)

It must be mentioned in passing that there are various explanations for the existence of slums in the cities which provide a basis for the solution and elimination of slum problems. Important among these theories are (1) those based on urban land-use patterns (Burgess, 1967, Hoyt, 1939), (2) based on housing shortage and maintenance (Koikal, 1970) and (3) based on socio-economic analysis (Stokes, 1962).

The rural slums in India are mainly the product of social structure. For centuries, the low caste people, especially untouchables, were required to live away from the high caste locality, especially in south direction of the village. So there is a clear-cut area in almost every village which may be termed as slum. Furthermore, other low caste people minus untouchables were permitted to live in or near the village. Gradually, their population growth and poverty resulted in creating areas which may be termed as slum.

### Social Structure

'Social structure' is one of the central concepts in sociology, but it has not been employed consistently or unambiguously. Spencer (1896) used biological analogies to make clear what he meant by the structure of society. Durkheim (1950, 1956) also left the term vague. Many later sociologists and social anthropologists have made attempts to give it more precise meaning, but their conceptions of social structure diverge widely.

One group of scholars defines social structure in terms of social relations. Radcliffe-Brown regards as "a part of the social structure all social relations of person to person . . . In the study of social structure the concrete reality with which we are concerned is the set of actually existing relations, at a given moment of time, which link together certain human beings" (Radcliffe-Brown, 1940 191-192). But he goes on to say that the object which we attempt to describe and analyse is structural form, i.e., general relationships, disregarding slight variations and the particular individuals involved. It is the structural form which most writers have designated as social structure. Radcliffe-Brown's definition is very broad (Firth, 1951 30).

Another, a second, group of writers have restricted the use of the term 'social structure' to the more permanent and organized relationships in society. For instance, Ginsberg (1921) regards social structure as the complex of the principal groups and institutions which constitute societies. From this point of view, the study of social structure can be undertaken in terms of institutional arrangements, or of the relations between social groups, or of both together. If we thus restrict the term 'social structure' to mean those more permanent and important relationships and groups, we perhaps need another term to refer to the activities which go on in society, and which frequently represent variations from the structural forms. To meet out this criticism, Firth uses 'social organization' and 'social structure'. In the aspect

of social structure is to be found the continuity principle of society and in the aspect of social organization is to be found the variation or change principle by allowing evaluation of situations and entry of individuals. However, it may be questioned whether social organization provides the change principle.

The third group of writers defines social structure in still more restricted way by making use of the notion of social role. The complex array of roles and statuses that define the behaviour of individuals and their relations with one another constitutes what is called social structure. It is exemplified by Nadel, and Gerth and Mills. Nadel argues that "We arrive at the structure of a society through abstracting from the concrete population and its behaviour pattern or network (or system) of relationships obtaining between actors in their capacity of playing roles relative to one another" (Nadel, 1957 12). Similarly Gerth and Mills say that the concept of role is ". . . the key term in our definition of institution", and "just as role is the unit with which we build our conception of institution, so institution is the unit with which we build our conception of social structure" (Gerth and Mills, 1953 22-23). Thus the analysis of social structure in terms of social roles is not fundamentally different from an analysis in terms of social institutions, for an institution is a complex or cluster of roles. Nevertheless, there is some difference of emphasis. However, the emphasis upon individual actors enacting roles produces an excessively individualistic conception

of social behaviour, while the social groups within society are neglected

A fourth set of scholars argues that the term "social structure" has nothing to do with empirical reality but with models which are built up after it. Levi-Strauss (1948) is the representative of this view. In his later works, Levi-Strauss appears to modify this view insofar as he claims that it is possible to discover an underlying structure of society which depends upon the structure of human mind.

Still others define social structure in terms of patterned regularity of behaviour or interaction. Such a definition emphasizes the element of pattern in the term social structure. Levy (1952), for instance, says that a structure is conceived as a pattern or observed uniformity of action.

One further point should be mentioned. A distinction has sometimes been made between social structure as a system of 'ideal' relations between persons and social structure as the system of actual relations. This distinction is important from the empirical point of view, particularly when one tries to observe what actually happens in social behaviour.

Of the different conceptions discussed above, the most useful for our purposes seems to be that which regards social structure as the complex of the major institutions and groups that can be easily identified. The existence of human society requires certain arrangements and processes, or, as has been said, that there are "functional prerequisites of society" (Aberle et al., 1950) or 'universal necessities' (Davis,

1969 30) The minimum requirement seem to be (1) maintenance of the population, (2) division of function among population, (3) solidarity of the group, (4) perpetuation of the social system through a system of communication, an economic system, arrangements for the socialization of new generations, a system of authority and distribution of power and cultural system, among others. The major institutions are those concerned with such basic requirements. We shall examine these elements of social structure in relation to the rural and urban poverty

#### METHODOLOGY

Research Design This study has an exploratory-cum-descriptive research design. While the purpose of the inquiry is to explore the structural dimensions of poverty, it is also intended to test certain hypotheses formulated on the basis of available literature and conditions obtaining in Indian society about which a brief reference has been made earlier. Here we shall focus on the methodology.

Universe and Sample Our purpose was, as stated earlier, to compare the rural and urban poverty. Hence the inquiry was conducted in the Kanpur city and the rural Kanpur. Since the city of Kanpur and Kanpur Nagar district are spread over a large geographical area, it was difficult to cover it in its entirety for the purposes of our study. We, therefore, resorted to stratified random sampling. That is to say, the population was first divided into strata and a simple random sample was

taken from each stratum and subsamples were then joined to form the total sample. This process gave not only each element in the population an equal chance of being included in the sample<sup>3</sup> but also made the selection of every possible combination of the desired number of consequentially likely. We adopted a three-stage random sampling for both rural and urban sample.

For the determination of universe in Kanpur city, we relied on the informations contained in the Kanpur Development Authority (KDA) Report. KDA prepared a list of slum localities for the purposes of World Bank Project which enlisted 97 slums dispersed in different directions of the city. Following our sampling procedure, we selected the sample in three-stages. The division of slums according to the direction of their location in the city was the first stage, the selection of the specific slum in each direction was the second stage, and the selection of the households in each selected slum was the third stage.

Of 97 slums, there are 39 slums in East, 17 in West, 12 in North, 10 in South, 12 in Central Zone, and 7 in North-South directions. From each of these directions one slum was picked up randomly. In this process, we got the following

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<sup>3</sup>"A population is the aggregate of all of the cases that conform to some designated set of specifications. . . . A single member of a population is referred to as a population element. When we select some of the elements with the intention of finding out something about the population from which they are taken, we refer to that group of elements as sample" (Chein, 1959 509-510).

six slums for purposes of our study Gulab Babu ka Ahata, Civil Lines from the East, Kachchi Basti, Govind Nagar from the West, Narain Darjee ka Ahata, Gwaltoli from the North, Loharan ka Bhatta, Pandu Nagar from the South, Harijan Colony, Kakadeo from the Central, and Laxmi Purwa mohalla from North-South (see Table 2.1)

Table 2 1  
Sample Spectrum of Households in Urban Slums

Direction	No of slums	No of slums picked up	Slums selected	No of households in selected slum	Sample of household selected
East	39	1	Gulab Babu ka Ahata, Civil Lines	92	18
West	17	1	Block No 6 Kachchi Basti, Govind Nagar	106	21
North	12	1	Narain Darjee ka Ahata, 12/10 Gwaltoli	230	46
South	10	1	Loharan ka Bhatta, 117/56 Pandu Nagar	634	126
Central	12	1	Harijan Colony, Kakadeo	58	11
North-South	7	1	Laxmi Purwa, 85/120	168	33
Total				1288	255

A list of households was prepared for the six selected slums and every twentieth household was taken for the purposes of study. In all five heads of the household<sup>4</sup> could not be interviewed. Hence the final sample studied remained 250.

The same method of a three-stage stratified random sampling was adopted for the selection of the sample from the rural Kanpur. The selection of the block was the first stage, the selection of the villages was the second stage, and the selection of the households was the final stage.

Kanpur Nagar district has only one sub-division, namely, Tehsil Sadar. There are in all three NES blocks, viz. Kalianpur, Bindhnu, and Sarsaul, in Sadar sub-division. One block was randomly selected and we got NES Block, Kalianpur.

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<sup>3</sup>A distinction is made between a household and a family for analytical purposes. A family is defined as a group of persons all of whom are related by blood, marriage or adoption and who generally share a common kitchen. On the other hand, the term household may include, besides family members, such persons as boarders, employees and occasional visitors or relatives staying with household at sometime during the one month reference period preceding the date of enquiry. The data collected in the survey are analysed here on the basis of the concept of family. The fact that all family members may not be present throughout the reference period while some non-family members such as visitors, guests, etc., may be present in the household sometime during reference period. So, the estimates based on family may not be biased on this score. The person recognized by other family members as the one who is generally responsible for taking decisions is considered as the head of household.

In all, 80 revenue villages and one town area, Bithoor, fall within the administrative jurisdiction of NES Block, Kalianpur. For the administrative convenience, this block has been divided into 10 Gram Sevak areas. One Gram Sevak area was randomly selected and Maksudabad was obtained. There are eight villages in Maksudabad Gram Sevak area, namely, Kalianpur, Ishwarganj, Mandhana, Bithoor, Maksudabad, Surar, Bhaunti, Sachendi, Rampur, Bhimsen, and Pakadi of which the following five villages were selected randomly: Kursauli, Lodhar, Naurangabad, Lohar Kheda, and Maksudabad. These villages have 88, 86, 147, 99, and 349 households, respectively. A list of household was prepared for these villages and every twentieth household was chosen. In this way, a sample of 152 households was obtained (see Table 2.2). However, two heads of household could not be contacted. Hence the final sample studied remained 150. The rich household, if found, were omitted.

Table 2.2

## Sample Spectrum of Households in Rural Slums

Villages selected in Gram Sevak area, Maksudabad of Kalianpur NES Block	No of house-holds in the selected villages	Sample selected
1 Lodhar	86	17
2 Naurangabad	147	29
3. Lohar Kheda	93	19
4 Kursauli	88	18
5 Maksudabad	349	69
Total	763	152

## SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Before we proceed, let us look briefly at the social characteristics of the sample studied in terms of age, caste, religion, marital status, occupation, income, and education (see Table 2 3)

Age The data regarding age-distribution of the poor reveals that majority of the sample from both rural and urban areas are in the age group of 30-40 and 40-50 years (36.0 vs. 39.2 per cent, and 47.3 vs. 25.6 per cent correspondingly). Those who are in the age-group of 20-30 years are more in urban than in rural areas (23.2 vs. 3.3 per cent), while those in 50 years-and-above age<sub>-group</sub> are more or less equally represented in both the rural and urban areas (12.4 and 12.0 per cent).

Caste Composition of the Poor Most represented caste of the poor in urban areas is Scheduled Caste (43.2 per cent) followed by backward castes (33.2 per cent), while caste most represented among the rural poor is backward caste (48.7 per cent) followed by intermediary caste. Those who are 'twice-born' castes and intermediary castes are larger in rural than in urban areas (21.3 vs. 11.8 per cent, 20.7 vs. 3.2 per cent, respectively). The proportion of non-caste is higher in urban (8.4 per cent) than in rural areas (2.0 per cent).

Religion There are only two religions groups in our sample. The Hindus are in majority than the Islam (94.0 vs. 6.0 per cent). The proportion of Hindus is much higher than those of Islam in both rural and urban areas (98.0 vs. 91.6 per cent in rural area vs. 8.4 per cent in urban areas).

Marital Status In both the samples, a large proportion of the poor is married. However, a relatively high percentage of rural than urban poor is married (100.0 vs. 98.4 per cent). There is a large percentage of widower in urban than rural areas (4.4 vs. 2.7 per cent). The divorce, however small, is exclusively an urban phenomenon (0.4 per cent).

Occupation The data show that 48.5 per cent sample is non-agricultural wage earner, while agricultural wage earners are 31.4 per cent. Nearly 8.0 per cent households belong to self-employed petty businessmen category. A small percentage (0.3 per cent) is salary earner and those who are not gainfully occupied are 12.0 per cent.

The proportion of families engaged in petty farming and related labour activities is higher in the rural than in the urban areas (84.0 vs. zero per cent), while more urban than rural poor are engaged in non-agricultural wage earning occupation.

Income The majority of the poor (53.7 per cent) fall in the income bracket of Rs. 200-300, while those earning Rs. 100-200 per month are 21.7 per cent and Rs. 300-400, 18.0 per cent. The percentage of the poor earning Rs. 100-and-less, Rs. 400-500, and Rs. 500-and-above a month is relatively less, say, for instance, 4.3, 2.0, and 0.3 per cent, respectively.

When we compare both the groups of poor, we mark that the condition of the urban poor is relatively better than that of the rural poor, at least, from the standpoint of income.

Table 2 3  
Social Characteristics of the Sample

Social characteristics	Rural sample (N = 150)	Urban sample (N = 250)	Rural + Urban sample (N = 400)
<b>1 Age</b>			
(i) 20-30 years	3 3	23 2	15 8
(ii) 30-40 years	36 0	39.2	38 0
(iii) 40-50 years	47 3	25.6	33.8
(iv) 50-and-above	12.4	12 0	12.4
<b>2 Caste</b>			
(i) Brahmin	8 7	4.4	6 0
(ii) Kshatriya	7 3	5.2	6 0
(iii) Vaishya	5 3	2.4	3.4
(iv) Intermediary caste	20 7	3 2	9 8
(v) Backward caste	48 7	33 2	39 0
(vi) Scheduled Caste	7 3	43 2	29 8
(vii) Non-caste	2 0	8.4	6 0
<b>3 Religion</b>			
(i) Hindu	98 0	91 6	94 0
(ii) Islam	2.0	8 4	6 0
<b>4 Marital Status</b>			
(i) Married	97 3	93 6	95 0
(ii) Widower	2 7	4 4	3.7
(iii) Divorced	0.0	0 4	0 3
(iv) Unmarried	0.0	1.6	1.0

Continued ..

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Social characteristics	Rural sample (N = 150)	Urban sample (N = 250)	Rural + Urban sample (N = 400)
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### 5. Occupation

(i) Petty cultivation and agriculture wage earner	84 0	0 0	31 4
(ii) Non-agriculture wage earner	15.3	68.4	48.5
(iii) Self employed or petty businessmen	0.7	12 0	7.8
(iv) Salary earners	0.0	0.4	0 3
(v) Not gainfully occupied	0.0	19.2	12 0

### 6 Income

(i) 100-and-less	10.0	0.8	4 3
(ii) 100-200	36.6	12.8	21 7
(iii) 200-300	50 0	56.0	53 7
(iv) 300-400	2 7	27 2	18 0
(v) 400-500	0 7	2.8	2 0
(vi) 500-and-above	0 0	0.4	0.3

### 7 Education

(i) Illiterate	80 7	56 0	65 2
(ii) Bare literate	5 3	27 6	19.3
(iii) Primary	2 0	6 0	4 5
(iv) Middle	0 0	0.8	0 5
(v) High school	12 0	8 4	9 7
(vi) Intermediate	0 0	0 8	0.5
(vii) Vocational training	0 0	0.4	0 3

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### Education

A large proportion of the poor in our sample is illiterate (65.2 per cent), and barely literate (19.3 per cent). Only one out of twenty has attained education upto middle standard, and one out of ten upto high school level. The percentages of the poor with intermediate level education and vocational training are very small (0.5 and 0.3 per cent, respectively).

The majority of both the groups of the poor are illiterate (80.7 per cent rural and 56.0 per cent urban).

### RESEARCH TOOLS FOR POVERTY ANALYSIS

Three broad categories of methodology were adopted for the analysis of poverty: (1) Quantitative and qualitative techniques; (2) Inductive techniques, and (3) Perspective. Since the poverty system cannot be fully understood merely by the help of quantitative techniques, we decided to rely also on qualitative techniques. The main qualitative techniques used were case study and observation. Inductive techniques fall into two broad classes: (i) one which is essentially aimed at identifying correlation, and (ii) the other in which one wishes to identify the dependency and causality. This led us to collect a set of data which measures different aspects of poverty and their major correlates.

Systems perspective was adopted to understand the relationship governing the behaviour of poverty system as a whole. This theoretical perspective is helpful to understand the dynamics of causes of poverty generation and interaction within micro- and macro-level phenomena.

## 1 Qualitative and Quantitative Techniques of Data Collection

The techniques which were used to collect information from the field may be grouped under four categories (1) Interview schedule, (2) Case study, (3) Observation, and (4) Documentary facts

Interview schedule was administered to collect the data on different dimensions of poverty. Interview schedule contained questions on all components that constitute the vector of poverty. The questions were both open-ended and closed. The open-ended questions made the informants come out with their views. After the interview schedule was ready, it was administered on ten respondents each from rural and urban areas. Necessary corrections were made in the light of difficulties faced by the interviewees. The interview schedule was, then, finalized.

A few case studies were made both from rural and urban areas in order to understand the poverty in depth. The informants were chosen to represent the different types of the rural and urban poor. The selection depended on their reliability for giving correct information, fair appreciation of the type of work they were asked to do, and their capability to serve as informants.

The observation was carried out by living among them during the statistical survey and interviews. The trend of class relationships, the consideration of social and economic mechanisms, interpersonal social relationship, diffusion of power, and the level of welfare and a host of similar other

factors call for forms of analysis which by nature cannot be simplified down to purely quantitative method without loss of their essential features. Therefore, qualitative appreciation of the structure of poverty was made through the observation

Collection of data was also done through the documentary sources. Mostly the information was collected from the records available with the Kanpur Development Authority, Census Officer, Block Development Office and Gram Panchayats. After the interview schedule was finalized and sample was drawn, we undertook the field work. Initially rapport was established with the inhabitants of the selected villages and slums. The data collection was accomplished first in urban areas followed by rural areas. The actual field work started in August, 1981 and ended in March, 1982.

The respondents were contacted at their residences to collect the intended information. Barring exceptions, the urban poor were more cooperative in giving responses than the rural poor. The researcher had to establish rapport longer in villages as compared to the city. May be, the urban poor are approached for such investigations relatively more frequently than that of the rural poor.

## 2 Inductive Techniques

Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) has been selected as a statistical technique to test the significance of the relationship between independent variables and poverty

### 3 Systems Perspective

In elementary sense, a system consists of two or more units that relate to each other in a structural relationship and form an entity whose elements are functionally inter-dependent. In more technical terms, Rapoport defines system as "(1) something consisting of a set (finite and infinite) of entities, (2) among which a set of relations is specified, so that (3) deductions are possible from some relations to others or from the relations among the entities to the behaviour or the history of the system" (Rapoport, 1968 453). In this sense, a system is a bundle of relations among interdependent elements that constitute an orderly arrangement characterized by structural integration and relational isomorphisms.

To be sure, the systems perspective is not new one, it has its roots in the classical literature. Remember Durkheim called the differentiation and integration in organic solidarity (Durkheim, 1960 3). Spencer elaborated analogies between specialized units of society and parts of the human body (Spencer, 1929).

There are four fundamental assumptions of social systems that transpires from the classical writings. One is the differentiation, second is the integration. The rest of the other two features are derived from these. Third assumption — a derivative of the former two — is that any observed cultural form or pattern of behaviour must fit the system, that is, must have a function (Merton, 1957 19-84). The system, in other words, is to be regarded as highly integrated with no

loose parts lying about To this, Merton calls "The Postulates of Universal Functionalism" (Merton, 1957 30-32) The fourth and final derivative assumption is that form fits functions Timasheff observes that this comes close to be tautologous (Timasheff, 1955 225-243)

The modern systems theory owes its development to Henderson's formulation of societal equilibrium, Cannon's principles of homeostasis, Weiner's formulation of cybernetics, and von Bertalanffy's concept of the open system Henderson, following Pareto, viewed the organism as possessing a self-regulating mechanism whose goal is the maintenance of equilibrium (Barber, 1970 28). Cannon developed the concept of homeostasis, a relatively stable condition an organism — the human as well as the social — strives to maintain Ludwig von Bertalanffy formulated the concept of the open system which regards the characteristic state of the living organism as that of an open system which exchanges materials with its environment and maintains itself in a steady state (Bertalanffy, 1968 188, 1967 117) Norbert Weiner employed cybernetic for a new "Science of communication and control" applicable to man, machine, and society (Weiner, 1948). Whether it is a tendency towards equilibrium, homeostasis, self-maintaining steady state, or communication and control, the fundamental assumption of the general system theory is that there is an underlying order, pattern, regularity and stabilization in human behaviour.

There are three discernible models of system analysis in the sociology the mechanistic, the organismic, and the structural models According to the mechanistic model of system

analysis, the society is an 'astronomical system' whose elements are human beings bound together by mutual attraction or differentiated by repulsion, groups of societies or States use systems of balanced oppositions. The leading sociologists who have made use of this model are Buckley (1967-8), Homans (1950), and Znaniecki (1936), among others.

The organismic model of the systems analysis assumes that, like an organism, society is an integrated system, that its elements are functionally interrelated and mutually interdependent, and that the whole is prior to the part and the elements are to be understood within the context of the whole. The most significant contributions have been made by Cannon (1929) and Parsons (1975: 67-83), among others. Both mechanistic and organismic models of systems analysis have come under sharp attack in recent years (see Sorokin, 1966: 45-46).

The structural model of system analysis is not a single strain, it consists of a variety of approaches represented by Levi-Strauss, Nadel, Gerth and Mills, Parsons, and Merton, among others. According to Mullins (1968, 1972) the structuralists "give logical and analytic priority to a whole over its parts, emphasizing the complex web of relationships that link and unite those elements".

Levi-Strauss (1948) conceived social structure as a logic behind reality. He insisted that the term 'social structure' has nothing to do with the empirical reality but with models which are built up after it. The structure exhibits the characteristics of a system and is made up of several

elements, none of which can undergo change without affecting changes in all other elements. Whereas Levi-Strauss regards social structure as a model behind reality, Nadel (1957) views it as reality itself. He regards the role system of any society, with its given coherence, as the matrix of the social structure. Nadel's conception of structure is based on three criteria: repetitiveness of the social phenomena, durability of the social phenomena, and moving equilibrium. Gerth and Mills (1946) defined social structure in terms of institutional orders and spheres. Social structure is made up of a certain combination or pattern of institutional orders, the institution being an organization of roles. Like Nadel, Gerth and Mills also contend that "Social structures are not frozen, they may be static or dynamic, they have beginnings, duration, varying degrees of unity, and they may disintegrate".

Parsons (1975) defined social structure as "stable systems of social interaction". The analytical sorter that delineate his system theory may be summarized as follows: (1) The system is made up of the interaction of human individuals, (2) Each member is both actor and object of orientation for both other actors and himself, (3) The actor is seeking a goal or set of goals, (4) The actor is confronted with a variety of situational conditions as societal environments and ecological constraints, and (5) The actor's orientation to the situation is both motivational and value-orientational. Parsons' social system is a constructed type, an analytical conceptual framework, and not an empirical referent. His general theory of

system recognizes four different aspects of reality — social, cultural, personality, and behavioural organism. Corresponding to these four aspects of reality, there are four sub-systems of action: the social, the cultural, the personality, and biological systems. The last three systems are the environments of the social system. Critics have charged that Parsons' system of concepts does not correspond to events in the 'real' world. Dahrendorf (1967) compares Parsons' social system with utopia. The absence of change and the existence of universal consensus on prevailing values characterize all utopians. In a similar vein, Buckley (1967) argues that Parsons' social system is a vaguely conceptualized amalgam of mechanistic and organismic models, placing excessive emphasis on integration, consensus and stability, and devaluing change, conflict and strife.

What is at issue is not the use of systems perspective, but the properties of the system central to the systems perspective is the problem of integration. How is the order possible? Parsons, deriving from Durkheim, Weber, and Pareto, said that the value systems in a normative order are of central importance. But Durkheim also talked of anomie and argued that universal conformity to normative expectation is unlikely which laid him to comment on the "normality of crime" (Durkheim, 1938 64-75). Recently the social sources as well as social consequences of deviance were placed solidly within the functionalists' social system by Merton's famous essay "Social Structure and Anomie" (see Merton, 1957 131-160).

Many other scholars took similar stand (see Davis, 1937 744-755, Merton, 1957 71-82, Coser, 1967) Of late, the most enduring controversy in contemporary functionalism has evolved around Davis' and Moore's theory of social stratification (see Chapter One).

These aspects and examples, then, suggest that one must look beyond an aspect of segment of social systems to find systems supporting consequences that may not conform to conventional values and preferences Patterns of behaviour may have loose system maintenance and effectiveness Merton suggested that such consequences may be identified as dysfunctions So did Levy while identifying the consequences as eufunctional, if positive, and dysfunctional, if negative (Merton, 1957 36-53, Levy, 1952 76-83)

In order to meet the challenges, a conflict perspective has, thus,

∟ been introduced in the systems perspective Conflict, of course, exists in complex societies Such conflicts have multifunctional sources of manifestations Conflict clearly impares any consensual model of society Parsons writes in his social system model about The Management of Tensions (Parsons et al , 1953, Parsons and Smelser, 1957 13-29)

Feldman and Moore have gone somewhat farther in suggesting extension model society. In The Social System Parsons constructs a complex model of society, in which social systems provides a linkage with two analytical distinct system personality and culture But these two concepts are also not free from difficulties. For instance, personality differences

become not only the sources of variability and deviance but also possible investigators of norms and values. Similarly, parts of the cultural system are less closely linked to principal components of social system (Moore, 1974). Another difficulty is that integration model neglects and minimizes conflict. In fact, perfectly integrated systems do not exist in nature. Alongwith deviance and conflict in every society, there is the gap between ideal values, norms and normative standard in actual practices.

We have adopted systems perspective in its modified later version.

#### INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

An important point which had to be decided before proceeding with the field-work was how the contrast between rural and urban poor be drawn. The most important independent variables for the purposes of the present study were (1) rural-urban background, (2) caste, (3) income, (4) occupation, and (5) education.

(1) Rural-Urban Background There are many points of continuity between the rural and urban community settings in India. But the discontinuities between them are also no less pronounced. They exercise their respective influences on the minds of the poor and also shape their values in their respective ways. Those living in cities get relatively better educational facilities, find wider job opportunities and vocational information, come in contact with heterogeneous population,

participate in different organizations and avail themselves of various means of recreation, become geographically mobile, and observe life chances in class-based city life. All this taken together makes a good deal of difference between the two groups of poor — rural and urban. So the rural-urban background was one important variable we selected.

(2) Caste Although the institution of caste stands constitutionally abolished today, caste is still the basic reality of the Indian society. It has continued to shape the outlook and the attitudes of the people for such a long time that it is not possible to ignore it. In any case, when it comes to describing the poverty of any section of Indian society, the caste cannot be ignored. Hence caste is another independent variable taken for this study.

The initial information was collected on caste as such which was coded into seven categories on the basis of the poor's responses: (i) Brahmin, (ii) Kshatriya, (iii) Vaishya, (iv) Intermediary, (v) Scheduled Caste, (vi) Backward castes, and (vii) Non-caste (other than Hindus). For the purpose of statistical analysis, the caste has been reduced to three categories: (1) Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and intermediary castes<sup>5</sup> labelled 'High', (2) Backward Castes and Scheduled Castes labelled 'Low', and (3) Non-Hindus, who have no caste system, labelled 'Non-caste'.

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<sup>5</sup>Intermediary castes include Kayastha and Khatriis

It will be observed that there are a number of other factors besides caste which may be affecting the poverty, such as age, religion, education, and marital status. It was necessary to control these in order to bring out the relationship between caste and various dimensions of poverty. It was, therefore, necessary to eliminate all these invalidating factors in order to minimize the chances of arriving at a spurious result. That the control of variables to an ideal degree is not possible cannot, however, be ignored. Hence the empirical procedures of the control were achieved by matching of sub-groups in certain respects.

Age was considered one of the important stimuli, and, therefore, the two groups were divided by age. We took the respondents in the age-group 30-40 years. Religion was the next factor. Hence, the sample was further split religion-wise. Only Hindus were taken. Then the marital status was taken as an important invalidating factor. The sample Hindu population was divided by marital status. Only married respondents were selected. Income level was then felt as being an important stimulus. The respondents with other income groups were eliminated and only those with Rs 200-300 were selected. This was finally split according to caste — high and low. The analysis will be based on this sample of the caste of the two groups.

Table 2 4

## Social Characteristics of the Matched Group

Invalidating factors	Original group		Matching factor selected	Matched group	
	Rural	Urban		Rural	Urban
Age group					
20-30 years	5	58	Age 30-40 years	55	98
30-40 years	55	98			
40-50 years	71	64			
50-and-above	19	30			
Number of cases	(150)	(250)			
Religion					
Hindu	53	95	Hindu	53	95
Non-Hindu	2	3			
Number of cases	(55)	(98)			
Marital status					
Married	53	95	Married	53	95
Unmarried	0	0			
Number of cases	(53)	(95)			
Income					
Rs. 100-and-less	3	0	Income Rs 200-300	32	50
Rs. 100-200	18	23			
Rs. 200-300	32	50			
Rs. 300-400	0	15			
Rs. 400-500	0	7			
Number of cases	(53)	(95)			
Caste					
High	12	7	Caste	12	7
Low	20	43	High	20	43
Number of cases	(32)	(50)	Low	(32)	(50)

(3) Income Income gives a family the power to control utilities and is, in turn, a hallmark of social prestige and status — an important ingredient of the style-of-life. In other ways, those who are in an economically sound position may be able to meet their socio-economic needs better than that of those in lower income groups. Therefore, income has been taken as an independent variable.

Total gross income includes all sources of income for the family. In addition to wage and salary income, this variable includes income from assets, interest, live-stock and other sources of unearned income. The information about income of the household has been collected into the following income categories: (i) Rs. 100-and-less, (ii) Rs. 100-200, (iii) Rs. 200-300, (iv) Rs. 300-400, (v) Rs. 400-500, and (vi) Rs. 500-and-above. For statistical purposes, the categories have been subsumed under three main income-brackets: (i) 300-500 labelled 'Low', (ii) Rs. 200-300 labelled 'Lower', and (iii) 200-and-less labelled 'Lowest'.

(4) Occupation Occupation determines the income and life-style. It is an important factor for determining the prestige and status of an individual in society. Certain occupations may be relatively more prestigious and rewarding than others. The occupation of the poor was obtained in the following categories: (1) Agriculture, (2) Sales people, (3) Skilled and semi-skilled worker, (4) Factory worker, (5) Common labourer, (6) Household industry worker, (7) Petty shopkeeper, (8) Government office employee, and (9) Miscellaneous.

For purposes of statistical analysis, these categories have been relabelled and merged into following categories

(1) Petty agriculture cultivator/labourer, (2) Non-agricultural occupation, (3) Petty businessman, (4) Salaried occupation, and (5) Not gainfully occupied.

(5) Education Education is related to the entry in job. It provides skill and knowledge, which, in turn, provide power, income and social status. The variable refers to the highest level of educational achievement of the head of the households. The information received has been coded into the following categories: (1) Illiterate, (2) Literate, (3) Primary, (4) Middle, (5) High school, (6) Intermediate, (7) Graduate, (8) Post-graduate, and (9) Technical training.

For the purposes of statistical analysis these categories have been reduced to the following two: (1) Illiterate, literate, primary, and middle level of education labelled 'Low', (11) High school, intermediate and graduate level of education labelled 'High', and also, Post-graduate level of education and technical training holders labelled 'High'.

Before we end this part of our discussion, it is necessary to state why the discrete items were selected instead of adopting a combination of factors to stratify the social structure for making a comparison. There are, of course, a number of studies (Lynd and Lynd, 1929, Dollard, 1957, Powdermaker, 1940, Warner and Lunt, 1941, Davis et al , 1941, Davis and Dollard, 1940, West, 1945) in which the latter device has been used, but its suitability in the present study was

doubtful in view of the wide differences between the groups to be compared. Three possible courses under these circumstances were open One alternative was to have a composite index. But the difficulty with this procedure was that one and the same item might not determine the status of families of both the rural and urban residents, and, therefore, a comparison on uncommon measures of socio-economic status would not be rational. Even the available scales are either for city (Chapin, 1928 99-111, Kuppaswamy, 1959 1-10, 1960 314-321; 1962, Varma, 1962 35-38), or for farm families (Pareek and Trivedi, 1965 311-321, 1964 34-40, 1963 297-303, Belcher, 1951 246, 1952, Freeman, 1961, Rahudkar, 1964, Lewis, 1955 146-148), but none of them compares rural and urban. The second alternative was to make use of the rating procedure (Gee, 1933 210-221; Reuss, 1937 66-75, Lundberg, 1940 69-87, Kaufman, 1944 9-46; 1946 71-85) This could be done by using the local people long resident in the community. But this method presented the same problem as the judgement of prestige, status or class positions by the urban and rural local residents would be applicable only to the respective communities and they might not be used interchangeably The third alternative, therefore, was to use a single factor index What seemed necessary under these conditions was that comparison should be made on the basis of the items which had been included in either the rural or the urban socio-economic status scales.

## MEASUREMENT AND IDENTIFICATION OF POVERTY IN INDIA

The measurement of poverty is a complicated issue (Mencher, 1967 1-12, Rein, 1970, Osmond and Durkin, 1979 87-95, Williamson and Iyer, 1975 652-663, Orhansky, 1969 34-41) Following the two conceptual approaches to poverty (see Chapter One), there are two popular criteria for measuring and identifying poverty one is the absolute and the other is the relative criteria Both these methods try to measure the extent and intensity of the poverty

### 1 THE MEASUREMENT OF POVERTY ON THE BASIS OF ABSOLUTE CRITERIA

The absolute level of poverty is a question of fact and it is not based on any subjective judgement (Dandekar and Rath, 1981). The absolute criteria refer to the 'vital minimum' in terms of physiological needs. A "poverty line" is fixed and those falling below it are labelled 'poor' Thus the most common measure of the extent of poverty is the proportion of the population living below a certain level of living called the 'poverty-line'. The extent of poverty may be supplemented with what may be called the intensity of poverty, namely, how many people live how much below the 'poverty line' The basic measure of poverty in terms of both extent and intensity of poverty is a certain level of living defined the 'poverty line'.

The fundamental issue involved in the measure of poverty is how one determines the 'poverty line'. Various factors have been used to determine 'poverty line'. Most important

among them are (i) Income level approach, (ii) Consumer expenditure approach, (iii) Energy requirement approach which includes calorie intake, food consumption level, and balance diet, and (iv) Basic services approach

(1) Income Level Approach The poverty line is determined on the basis of agreed level of income necessary to meet the minimum needs of life. For example, the Government of India, in consultation with a group of experts, decided in 1962 that a per capita monthly expenditure of Rs 20.00 at 1960-61 prices should be considered the national minimum or 'the poverty line'. The group did not reveal the basis of this determination (Ojha and Bhatt, 1962, 1963). We have adopted this approach to measure poverty. We have considered them poor who spend Rs. 24.00 in rural and Rs 42.00 in urban areas per capita per month.

(2) Consumer Expenditure Approach Another criterion for measuring poverty is the proportion of expenditure spent on certain essential items of consumption such as food. It is one of the characteristics of the poor level of living that a large proportion of total consumer expenditure is taken by items essential for sheer physical existence and survival such as food. From this standpoint, poverty line may be defined as that level of consumer expenditure at which certain proportion, such as 80 per cent or 85 per cent of total expenditure is devoted to food, or food and fuel or food, fuel, and light. Dandekar finds great merit in such a measure of 'poverty line' but notes that neither he nor anyone

else have used it. This criterion is concrete and more reliable than <sup>the</sup> data on consumption or income inequality. We have followed this approach in our study the poor are those who spend nearly 90.0 per cent of their income on basic needs.

(3) Energy Requirement Approach One of the widely used indirect methods of estimating the extent of malnutrition (i.e., the nutritional status) of a population is to estimate it as that proportion of population with energy intakes below some norms called 'requirements' (Srinivasan, 1981: 3-19). These norms, for a reference man and for a reference woman<sup>5</sup>, were published by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and evaluated periodically by their experts (FAO, 1957, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1978). The publications of FAO were very careful to point out that the 'requirements' cannot be used for examining the nutritional status of a population. For instance, FAO's 1974-Report lays down that 'The figures for recommended intakes may be compared with actual consumption figures determined by food-consumption surveys. Such comparisons, though useful, . . . are not adequate yardstick for assessing health' (FAO, 1974: 2). The comparisons cannot in themselves justify statements that undernutrition, malnutrition or overnutrition

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<sup>5</sup> A reference man is between 20 and 39 years of age, weighs 65 Kg., healthy and employed for eight hours in an occupation involving moderate activity. He spends eight hours in bed, four to six hours in recreation, etc. A reference woman is between 20 and 39 years of age, weighs 55 Kg., healthy and employed for eight hours of moderate activity. She spends eight hours in bed, four to six hours sitting or in very light activity and two hours in walking, active recreation, etc. (Patwardhan, 1960).

is present in a community or group. Such conclusions must always be supported by clinical or biochemical evidence. FAO also points out that the methodological basis for estimating energy requirements is weak and much of information of protein requirements and energy-protein relationships come from studies on healthy young men in the U S A , thereby making them of questionable applicability elsewhere (FAO, 1974 2-4). Despite that, in its Fourth World Food Survey, FAO has not refrained from using average energy requirements as the basis for estimating the proportion of malnourished in a number of countries (FAO, 1977). Very recently Sukhatme has argued in favour of this criteria (Sukhatme, 1981). Energy requirement is explained through calorie-intake and/or balanced diet, and food consumption level.

Calorie-Intake      The basic concept at the root of the calorie requirement calculation is that of energy balance. A human body converts the energy content of food (measured in calories) into other forms of energy of which, a part is used up in maintaining bodily functions, a part is converted into changes in body weight, a part is used up in physical activity including work and the remaining part is 'wasted' particularly in the energy content of the bodily wastes. By law of conservation of energy, the energy input has to be equal to energy output. Different human beings differ in their functions as energy converters. These are conceptual problems of using calorie requirement (Payne and Dugdale, 1977, Sukhatme and Margen, 1978).

Various estimates of the minimum calorie requirements for a representative "man and woman" have been made by different authorities (FAO, 1957, Patwardhan, 1960). There exists a consensus that a "reference" man in India requires about 2,250 calories per capita per day (Sukhatme, 1965). These are to be derived from the entire diet-comprising (cereals and pulses), sugar, fruits, meat, egg, etc. In terms of foodgrains (cereals and pulses), it has been estimated that in the urban area, the calories required would be 1500 (i.e., 66 per cent of the total requirements), for the rural area the same is estimated at 1800 (i.e., 80 per cent of total calories needed). In quantitative terms, in order to obtain these calories, foodgrain consumption of 518 grams per capita per day for the rural area and 432 grams per capita per day for the urban area are estimated (Madalgi, 1967, 1981).

The early studies on India by Ojha (1970), Dandekar and Rath (1971) and a much later global study of Reutlinger and Selowsky (1976), are of this type. There have been studies which go beyond estimating the proportion of calorie deficient in a population at a time and estimate the calorie-gap in terms of foodgrains that needs to be met if malnutrition is to be eliminated (FAO, 1977, Scandizzo and Graves, 1978, Scandizzo and Knudsen, 1979). The 1971-study of Dandekar and Rath has triggered a debate (Dandekar, 1981 1241-1250, Dandekar and Rath, 1971, Rao, 1978, Sukhatme, 1978 1373-1384, Sukhatme, 1981 1318-1324, Rao, 1981 1433-36). For Dandekar and Rath, 2,250 calories per day per capita may define the 'poverty-line'. They defined the poverty line as that expenditure level at

which the average calorie intake met this norm. They raised slightly the Government of India's per capita monthly expenditure of 1962 from Rs 170 to Rs.180 per annum at 1960-61 prices (Dandekar and Rath, 1971). Sukhatme prefers 2,750 calories per day per consumer unit to decide poverty line (Sukhatme, XLVII Book 4, 1978 1973-1984). Be that as it may, scholars have shown considerable doubt over the use of calorie norm as a criterion for determining nutritional status (Visaria, 1979). Dandekar himself calls such a definition arbitrary and says that such arbitrariness is inevitable (Dandekar and Rath, 1981). We have considered them poor who are getting food-grain 206 gms in rural and 300 gms. in urban areas and obtaining only 716 and 1041 calories, respectively.

Balanced Diet Approach Poverty may be measured from a single item such as food and more than one food item may be prescribed as physical norms. The FAO has worked out normative diets for groups of countries including South East Asia. For India, one can get various recommendations made by the Nutrition Advisory Committee (1965). Sukhatme had done such exercises (Sukhatme, 1977, 1978, 1979) and worked out two food baskets corresponding to a minimum and medium concept. His minimum food basket per day per person consists of 0.403 Kg. cereals, 0.104 Kg pulses, 0.201 Kg milk, and 0.137 Kg fruits and vegetables. Besides these, he included certain quantities of fruit, sugar, oil and fats, meat, fish and eggs.

This measure creates practical difficulties. It is not easy to be satisfied item by item on this point. For instance, households may have more milk and less or none of meat, fish

and eggs. Therefore, the method usually adopted is to find out the cost of the specified diet and to take that level or total expenditure at which the households seem to spend on the items of the specified diet — an amount equal to its worked out cost, not item by item but on all items put together. This is what Bardhan and Rudra do. According to Rao, "The balanced diet-approach is preferable to the calorie intake approach. And this is what — writers like Bardhan (1974), Rudra (1974) and others have done, unlike Dandekar and Rath (1971) who have only used the calorie intake criterion (Rao, 1977).

We have not adopted this approach in our study.

(4) Basic Services Approach Of late, scholars have shifted their attention from mere income or consumer expenditure or energy requirement approaches and argued in favour of a basic services approach. This seems to us to have an edge over the former ones. Sukhatme, for instance, argues that other factors besides these should be included to measure poverty of the (rural) population. Some of the factors, he suggests, are (i) protected supply of drinking water, (ii) housing, (iii) clothing, (iv) fuel, (v) latrines, (vi) sanitation, (vii) opportunities for education, (viii) avenues for employment, and (ix) undernutrition and food (Sukhatme, 1981: 1318-1323). Recently some studies moved in this direction to measure India's poverty (Morris and McAlpin, 1982; Mukherjee, Ray and Rayalakshmi, 1979: 283-292). And this brings us to consider the relative approach to measurement of poverty.

## 2 MEASUREMENT OF POVERTY ON THE BASIS OF RELATIVE CRITERIA

Various scholars do not rely merely on absolute measures of poverty. They argue that even the absolute criterion is relative and, thus, favour relative criteria for measuring poverty. Very little or no effort has been made to measure and identify poverty in India on the basis of relative criteria. Whatever studies are, they prefer merely physical quality of life index (see Morris and McAlpin, 1982, Mukherjee *et al.*, 1979 283-292). Recently some studies have been conducted with an eye to include relative criteria, Rogers, for example, distinguishes three classes of components in his measurement of poverty in rural India: food consumption, non-food consumption, and a social group of variables (Rogers, 1976).

In this study we have combined both absolute and relative criteria to identify and measure poverty. These factors include (1) Income and assets, (2) Occupation and unemployment, (3) Food consumption, (4) Shelter, (5) Socio-cultural features, (6) Health, (7) Education, (8) Demographic features, and (9) Politics and power. The details of each of them is provided in the respective chapters.

In summary, then, four areas of empirical interest, namely, the problem of poverty in India, the formulation of the problem, the nature and quality of materials available, and the methodology, have been discussed.

The problem of poverty is very acute in India today and, among the two pockets of poverty, rural poverty is worse than the urban poverty.

This inquiry has a three-fold objective (1) to explore the components of rural and urban poverty, (2) to assess the contribution of each component of poverty towards generation of poverty and creation of life-styles, and (3) to find out the way the poverty is caused. In all, nine components of the vector of poverty have been discerned: occupation and unemployment, income and assets, food, shelter, health, education, demographic features, socio-cultural features, and power and politics. The hypotheses related to these components have been formulated.

Scholars have, by and large, neglected the study of poverty in India. Despite a large number of village and urban studies, scant attention has been paid towards a comparison of rural and urban poverty. Consequently, one and the same yardsticks are applied for both rural and urban poverty.

This inquiry has an exploratory-cum-descriptive design. The study has been conducted in the city and rural Kanpur on a sample of 400 of which 250 are urban and 150 rural. We have adopted three research tools for the poverty analysis: quantitative and qualitative techniques, inductive techniques, and systems perspective. In all five features of social structure — rural-urban background, caste, income, occupation, and education — have been taken in order to see the relationship between them and poverty. We have relied on both absolute and relative criteria for the identification and measurement of poverty, for it was felt that absolute criteria are also, in the ultimate analysis, relative criteria.

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## CHAPTER THREE

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### THE SETTING

With this chapter our attention shifts to the setting where the inquiry was conducted. As is well known, the nature of territorial base and geographical conditions affect, to a large extent, a community's social structure and style of life. In the eighteenth century, Montesquieu (1962) paid a great deal of attention to the role of climate in determining the spirit of laws, or more broadly, as we would say today, the culture of the people. To be sure, Montesquieu was not so extreme as Cousin in the century later. "Yes, gentlemen, give me the map of a country, its configuration, its climate, its waters, its winds, and all its physical geography, give me its natural productions, its flora, its zoology, and I pledge myself to tell you, a priori, what the man of that country will be and what part that country will play in history, not by accident, but of necessity, not at one epoch, but in all epochs" (Cousin, quoted in Febvre, 1925: 10; For further evidence, see Sorokin, 1928: Chap. III). Against these extreme versions, one is also reminded of Hegel's impatient retutation. "Do not speak to me of geographical determinants. Where the Greeks once lived the Turks live now. That settles the question." Keeping in view both these accounts of geographical impact on social life, let us look at the characteristics of the setting of our investigation — Kanpur city and Kanpur Nagar district of the State of Uttar Pradesh, India.

## India's Population

India stretches over a vast territory of 32,87,782 sq km which is just 2.4 per cent of the world area. According to the Census of India 1981, the total population was 683,810,051. In other words, every sixth person in the world is an Indian. In comparison, 15.53 per cent of the total world population lives in this country on less than 2.5 per cent of the globe's total land area. The density of population per sq km is as high as 221. India is only second after China in population.

Like other developing countries, more and more people in India are moving to the cities (Padmanabha, 1981). The Census of India 1981 indicates a modest but significant increase in the pace of growth of the urban sector. Thus, during 1971-81 the urban population grew at an annual average rate of 3.8 per cent compared with 3.2 per cent during 1961-71, and only 3.1 per cent during 1951-61 (Dyson, 1981). The total increment to the urban population during the 1970s was on the order of 49 million people. This means that a little under a quarter of the population (23.7 per cent) — a total of 156 million people — is now classified as living in urban areas<sup>1</sup> (see Table 3.1).

## Uttar Pradesh and Its Population Growth

Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) continues to be the most populous State with a population of 110,858,019. This is more than the

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<sup>1</sup>The total population (urban) would be approximately 159 million if Assam, and Jammu and Kashmir were included. The criteria for classifying residential localities as "urban" has not changed between 1971 and 1981.

Table 3 1

## All-India Trends in Urbanization, 1941-81

Census year	Population		Per cent urban	Average annual growth rate (per cent)		Growth in urban population (000s)	Transfer from rural areas	
	Total (000s)	Urban (000s)		Total	Urban		(000s)	As per cent of growth
1941	309,019	43,559	14 10					
1951	349,905	61,630	17.62	1 24	3.47	18,071		
1961	424,836	77,562	18 30	1 94		22,044	8 706	39
1971	528,918	106,966	20.22	2 19	3 21	29,404	10,402	35
1981	658,141	156,188	23 73	2.19	3.78	49,222	23,088	47

Source P. Padmanabha, Provisional Population Totals, Rural-Urban Distribution, paper 2 of 1981, Series I (New Delhi. Office of the Registrar General, 1981).

population of most of the countries of the world. Only six countries have a large population than Uttar Pradesh. These are Brazil, China, Indonesia, Japan, U S A, and U S S R. The population of U P has been growing at a rate higher than the country as a whole since 1901. The population having increased by 25.49 per cent during 1971-81 against 19.78 per cent in decade 1961-71 — a growth rate, that had always been lower than the all-India average, has for the first time in the past eight decades "overshot" (Gupta, 1981). This alarming rate of population growth has resulted into higher density of population. Today 77 more people are occupying a square kilometer area as compared to 1971, the density of population being 377. The birth rate in U P is still high (40.1) during 1977-79 while the death rate in the same period is 18.5 per 1,000 population.

The literacy rate in Uttar Pradesh is low. Of total males and females, the literates were 37.0 and 10.4 per cent, respectively (Natrajan, 1978).

#### Kanpur City: The Urban Context

Kanpur city (80°23'4" E and 26°28'15" N) is the industrial metropolis of northern India and the largest urban agglomeration of Uttar Pradesh. It is located at the right bank of the Ganga at a distance of about 1004 km from Calcutta, 1342 km from Bombay, 425 km from Delhi and 63 km from Lucknow — the Capital city of the State (Singh, 1971: 1).

Tradition has it that Kanpur derives its name from Kanhaiyapur, the town of Kanhaiya (Lord Krishna). In the course of time, Kanhaiyapur got abbreviated as Kohna and subsequently as Kanpur (the twisted spelling of which during the

population of most of the countries of the world. Only six countries have a large population than Uttar Pradesh. These are Brazil, China, Indonesia, Japan, U S A., and U S S R. The population of U P has been growing at a rate higher than the country as a whole since 1901. The population having increased by 25.49 per cent during 1971-81 against 19.78 per cent in decade 1961-71 — a growth rate, that had always been lower than the all-India average, has for the first time in the past eight decades "overshot" (Gupta, 1981). This alarming rate of population growth has resulted into higher density of population. Today 77 more people are occupying a square kilometer area as compared to 1971, the density of population being 377. The birth rate in U P is still high (40.1) during 1977-79 while the death rate in the same period is 18.5 per 1,000 population.

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Table 3 2

## Trend of Population Growth in Uttar Pradesh

Year	Population (in 000 s)	Decadal variation	Density of population per sq km
1901	48,628	-	165
1911	48,155	-0 97	164
1921	46,672	-3 08	159
1931	49,780	+6.66	169
1941	56,535	+13 57	192
1951	63,220	+11 82	215
1961	73,755	+16 66	251
1971	80,341	+19 78	300
1981	110,858	+25 49	377

Source P Padmanabha, Provisional Population Totals, Paper 1 of, 1981 Census (New Delhi Office of the Registrar General, 1981)

British regime was Cawnpore. According to another tradition, Kanpur is derived from Karnapur and is associated with Karna, the hero of the Mahabharata fame. It, then, appears that Kanpur is one of the oldest places. However, it could find place on the map only after the advent of the British.

Before the arrival of British, Kanpur was under the supervision of Oudh, but for the first time in the first year of the nineteenth century it was transferred from the Nawab of Oudh to the British and was made the headquarter of the district in 1801.

Prior to the first war of Independence in 1857, Kanpur was a city with a hypertrophied cantonment and an atrophied civil lines. The movement of 1857 brought, in its wake, several changes in the morphology of Kanpur. The cantonment, which once occupied a vast tract of the central part of the city, shrank considerably and shifted eastward, and a court, jail, collector's office and other administrative offices were constructed. In 1858, the first railway reached Kanpur and a bridge over the Ganga was completed in 1888.

With the rapid growth of industries, after 1857, the city area of Kanpur gradually expanded by assimilating groups of small villages around it, such as Kurswan, Sisamau and so on. Collectorganj was laid out in 1888, Phoolbagh in 1890, Latouche Road in 1900 and the Meston road in 1913, which very rapidly developed into important shopping and commercial centres.

Thousands of refugees, especially from West Panjab in 1947, poured into the city and overnight new colonies sprang up.

Hallet Nagar, now known as Govind Nagar, Gumbi No 5, Vishnupuri, Krishna Nagar, Babupurwa and Kidwai Nagar are some of the important areas that have developed since independence. Shopping centres and refugee markets grew on the road-sides and pavements, which later led to the building of new sophisticated markets like the Navin Market and the P P N. Market of today.

The post-independence change has not only been very fast, but also significant in more than one way. Among the refugees, who crept into the city, was a class of artisans who were capable of making rapid constructions. The carpenters, for example, made furniture, which developed into a regular industry.

In short, the face of the city changed beyond recognition in no time. A city, which so far consisted mainly of the mill owners and mill-workers, developed a middle class population too. The needs of the middle class had to be met now onwards. They needed educational, recreational, and cultural facilities. The demand for such finer aspects of life, hitherto unknown or lying dormant, came to the surface. The city occupies now a nodal position in northern India. The city has the advantage of being located in cotton, wheat and rice producing alluvial plain of the Sutlej and the Ganga and is not far from the forest clad hilly tracts in south. Though the city is situated "outside the peninsular cotton tract", it is "well placed between Panjab Cotton and Bihar Coal" (Spate, 1957 281). Its situation in the most thickly populated agricultural part of the country is a perennial source of cheap labour lying at

the apex of an isosceles triangle with its base joining the two post cities of India — Calcutta and Bombay

The population of Kanpur city has increased from 188,712 in 1891 to 1,782,665 in 1981. In 1891-1901, the 22.4 per cent rate of growth of population was higher than -11.4 per cent rate of growth of population during 1901-11. The next decade 1911-1941 witnessed a fairly rapid growth in population. The population growth was so rapid in the city that it reached to 1,275,242 in 1971, and touched 1,782,665 in 1981. However, the annual growth rate during 1971-81 was the same as it was in 1961-71, i.e., 30 per cent. Kanpur city occupies eighth place among the largest cities in India from the population standpoint.

Table 3.3

Population of Kanpur (Urban) 1891-1981

Year	Population	Per cent variation
1891	188,712	24.6
1901	197,170	12.4
1911	178,557	-11.4
1921	216,436	21.2
1931	243,755	12.6
1941	487,324	99.9
1951	705,383	44.7
1961	971,062	37.7
1971	1,275,242	31.3
1981	1,782,665	47.0

Source - Rural-Urban Migration and Pattern of Employment in India (Japan: The Institute for Economic Research, Osaka City University, 1980).

Kanpur is situated in the sub-tropical continental interior part of the Ganga valley. It lies at a distance of about 800 km from the nearest sea board and is within 160 km of the Himalayas and enjoys the sub-tropical monsoon type of climate. The average summer temperature at Kanpur is  $35.6^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The change in temperature is clearly noticeable during rainy season which falls to the mean temperature of  $27.3^{\circ}\text{C}$  in this season. The temperature in winter season decreases rapidly during the months of October and November and goes down to about  $8.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The average winter temperature is  $19.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

Kanpur is well connected with other parts of the country by rail, road and air. It is served by the Northern Railway, Central Railway and North-Eastern Railway systems. The main line of the Northern Railway from Delhi to Mughal Sarai (and onward to Calcutta on the Eastern Railway) passes through Kanpur. A branch line of the same system connects it with Lucknow on the Amritsar-Mughal Sarai main line. Kanpur is connected with Jhansi and Banda by branch lines of the Central Railway. Recently it has been connected with Sonpur and Gorakhpur divisions of the North-Eastern Railway with broad gauge.

Kanpur lies on the National Highway No. 25 connecting Lucknow and Jhansi, and via Lucknow with districts lying in the northern part of Uttar Pradesh such as Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, Sitapur, Faizabad, Basti, and Gorakhpur. Kanpur also lies on the G.T. Road — National Highway No. 2 — running from Calcutta to Peshawar which connects with Varanasi,

Allahabad, Fatehpur, Kannauj, Etah, Aligarh, Bulandshahar, Meerut, and districts further north

Kanpur has also acquired a place on the air map of India. The Indian Air Lines commenced touching Kanpur on the 1st February, 1963. The aircraft routing is so planned as to give connection at Lucknow to Kanpur traffic for Calcutta.

For a great crisis in industrial and trade adventure of East India Company, the trading monopoly rights of the company ceased in 1833. As a result <sup>the</sup> then British entrepreneurs played a leading and co-ordinating role in the foundation of industries in the pre-mutiny and post-mutiny periods. Since then, Kanpur has developed as an important centre for the manufacturing of textiles, leather and engineering goods, besides several other agro-industries.

To meet the army's as well as people's needs, a chain of textile mills was established in the second half of the <sup>being</sup> nineteenth century, important among them <sup>the</sup> Elgin Cotton Spinning and Weaving Co. in 1896, Muir Mills in 1874, and the Kanpur Woollen Mills in 1876. In 1896, the Empire Engineering Company was founded which later on merged in the British India Corporation. Victoria Mills was also established in 1886. This trend of development made Kanpur as a major textile centre in Northern India and rightly termed as the 'Manchester of the East'.

The next industry to be organized in factories sector was tanning which has now become of even greater importance than cotton. In order to meet the need of leather goods of the army, the Government Harness and Saddlery Factory was opened

on a small scale in 1863. The North West Tannery was set up in 1882. By 1907, there were three larger tanneries, viz, Cooper Allen and Co., North West Tannery and Government Harness and Saddlery Factory. The existence of tanneries in Kanpur gave rise to a considerable number of industrial units in the manufacture of leather goods.

With increasing pressure on the soil, the cultivation of commercial crops, among which oil seeds were to be reckoned, was developing continuously. The other industries that were set up at the fag end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century in Kanpur included Cawnpore Sugar Works, Dwarika-Dheesh Jute Mills, 7 Cotton Ginning and Pressing Units, a tent factory, two flour mills, a brush factory, two iron foundaries, tape factory, chemical works and soap factories.

During 1930's the Swadesh-encouragement of the use of home products movement and the outbreak of the Second World War gave great impetus to the development of industries. As a result of this motive, Indian entrepreneurs, above all the U K group, stepped into the industrial field and set up various industries. The rapid growth of industries can be seen from Table 3.4.

At present there are 583 small units in manufacturing sector which produce goods worth Rs. 120 crores annually. These units employ 19,628 persons.

In the unorganized sector, there are a large number of small scale units functioning in the district. Although their exact number is not known, there are 3,387 small scale industries which have been registered with the Directorate of

Table 3 4  
Growth of Industries

Industry group	No of units	
	1951	1980
1 Food and beverages	37	57
2 Total textiles	21	48
3 Total chemicals	13	72
4 Total metal based industries	19	173
5 Machinery and transport equipment	45	97
Total	135	447

Source B Kumar, "Industrial Growth of Kanpur", Souvenir Tenth National Seminar on the IASLIC (Kanpur I I T. Central Library, 1982).

Industries providing employment to 26,108 persons

Whatever new units have been set up after the planning era, are practically facing difficulty due to power crisis or labour trouble. There are large number of large as well as small scale industries, which have gone sick. This is the real situation which has already surfaced but does not take into account the fate of many other units which are somehow or other ostensibly running but are really sick and may collapse any time due to continued power crisis, credit-squeeze, labour agitation, law and order situation and general economic gloom.

Kanpur is situated at the end of the south-east area of Kannaugi dialect, which is a dialect of Western Hindi belonging to the central group according to the linguistic survey of

India by G A Grierson The Kannauji area adjoins the Awadhi (dialect) area on the eastern and northern sides and the Bundeli (dialect) and Braj Bhasha (dialect) areas on western Hindi on the southern and western sides For this reason the Kannauji Dialect is sometimes referred to as Braj Bhasha influenced by Awadhi, a principal dialect of Eastern Hindi belonging to the Mediate group It is, therefore, natural that, the mother tongue of the people in Kanpur district should be Kannauji But, with the development of Kanpur, there has been a rapid increase in other languages such as Panjabi, Sindhi, and Bengali as a result of the influx of migrants It shows that the linguistic constitution of the population and the language life in Kanpur have become complicated In Kanpur, which has developed as the principal city in this area from the latter half of the nineteenth century, Hindi has been used in private and public life Hindi as mentioned here, is Khari Boli Hindi or Standard Hindi The elite uses English for its communication (The Institute for Economic Research, 1980)

Kanpur has never been a major temple or pilgrimage centre Of late, some good temples, Gurudwaras, Churches and Mosques have emerged The pilgrimage centres of Prayag, Varanasi, Mathura-Vrindavana, Chitrakoot, Hardwar, Ayodhya, Vindhyachal and Badrinath are easily accessible from Kanpur There is obvious distinction between religious patterns of rural and urban areas. The Great Traditions characterize the urban and the Little Traditions to rural areas (Singer, 1958) In urban areas it is possible to distinguish clearly between the

'religion' and the 'secular', but it is not possible to do so in villages (Adams and Voltemade, 1970, Srinivas, 1952)

There is a huge complex of primary schools, midale schools and intermediate colleges. Above them all, there is a large number of degree colleges affiliated to the University of Kanpur founded in 1966. At present, the university has one constituent college, nine Ayurvedic and Unani colleges, and 72 affiliated colleges.

Kanpur has also several other centres of higher learning such as C S Azad University of Agriculture and Technology founded in 1975, G S V M Medical College in 1955, Government Leather Institute, Government Central Textile Institute in 1938, National Sugar Institute in 1936, and Indian Institute of Technology in 1960.

There is a large number of film theatres and public places like Nanarao Park, Ganesh Udyan (Phool Bagh), Brijendra Swaroop Park, Motijheel, Allen Forest, and agricultural gardens, for recreation of the people. Various parks and clubs such as Green park, Golf-club, Cawnpore club, Ganges Club, Union club, Flying club, also work.

Kanpur city has a variety of allopathic hospitals, dispensaries, maternity centres, X-ray, and pathological clinics, and Ayurvedic and Homeopathic hospitals and dispensaries. There are well equipped hospitals like L L R Hospital, U I S E Maternity hospital, Laxmipat Singhania Institute of Cardiology, J K Institute of Radiology and Cancer Research, Kailashpat Singhania Institute of Medicine, Infectious disease hospital, Children hospital, and Murari Lal Chest hospital.

the  
 Kanpur, being / biggest city among KAVAI town groups, has enormity and complexity of responsibilities of providing basic civic amenities to its people. Finding the situation almost out of control, the State Government planned to give to the city, a more powerful, democratic civic administration, by an elected Municipal Corporation in 1960. But, since proper housing in this sprawling city and its planned development were considered by the State Government as two most vital aspects under the pressing circumstances, the Uttar Pradesh Awas Evam Vikas Parishad was created in 1965 to frame and execute housing schemes and other developmental projects.

In 1975, a Development Authority, headed by the secretary of the Department of Local Self-government was created at the State level to ensure planned development in the State under a Master plan framed by it. To set its operation on a firm statutory footing, the Uttar Pradesh Urban Planning and Development Act was passed a year later (1976).

Thus, the civic administration of the city is being handled primarily by two major agencies the Kanpur Nagar Mahapalika and the Kanpur Development Authority, both under the charge of the Administrator, who discharges the duties of the Mayor and acts as the Chairman of the Development Authority.

#### SLUMS OF KANPUR CITY

Housing Condition One of the crucial problems of the poor in Kanpur city is the problem of shelter and the shortage of houses has resulted in slums. In fact, housing for the poor

in cities is a world-wide phenomenon, although it is much more acute in poor countries of the world (see Lasch, 1946, Abrams, 1946) The surge of population due to rapid industrialization shows the tremendous impact on the urban life of Kanpur in the mushroom growth of slums due to acute shortage of houses for low income group, middle income class, and economically weaker sections of the society In order to provide shelter to this vast-multitude of population, a number of private Ahatas and tenement houses sprang up all over the city by way of lucrative investment by the rich people These private Ahatas have now become overcrowded resulting in high degree of congestion Ahatas are now the recognized slums of Kanpur owned by private property owners (Badami, 1976 1)

Ahatas are built within compound or enclosing walls These are small dingy rooms usually extremely unsanitary and overcrowded Generally the houses in the slums are of Kachcha type (mud houses) except few which have been constructed by Municipal authorities and Kanpur Development Authority. There is lack of doors properly attached with the houses as well as of ventilation system which make the houses full of dark since no sunlight ever passes through.

The slum colonies have grown without any planning with the result that the lanes are narrow The construction of the houses is such in which no drainage system may be constructed The indifferent sanitary arrangements and inadequate amenities like water supply and street lighting adds further to the chaotic conditions prevailing in these slum areas The poor housing condition is a good source for the spread of epidemics

like cholera, small-pox, gastritis, tuberculosis and other diseases

Roughly speaking, there are four types of residential areas for the lower income group in Kanpur city, namely (i) labour colony, (ii) squatter areas, (iii) urbanized rural settlements, and (iv) other slum areas. These consist mostly of factory workers, workshop workers, subordinate employees of the various establishments, construction workers, cycle rickshaw pedallers, hawkers, sweepers and other manual workers.

The first type of residential area for the lower income inhabitants is the planned labour colonies developed by the State governments, local bodies like the Kanpur Municipal Corporation and private firms mostly during 1930's and 1950's. There were six large labour colonies in 1978 which had been developed by private firms: Cooper Allen Factory Settlement at Allenganj, MacRobertganj Settlement (for Lal-Imli), Kakomanganj Settlement, Elgin Mills Settlement, Maxwellganj Settlement, and J K Settlement at Kamala Nagar. They were completed <sup>during</sup> the 1920's and 1930's and mostly located near the factories concerned. The Kanpur Improvement Trust, which was established in 1919, has constructed several labour colonies since the 1920's.

After a visit of late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1952, the activities of housing construction for labourers have been strengthened by the Central and State governments. In Kanpur, the Public Works Department of the Uttar Pradesh Government, and Kanpur Development Board, organized in 1945, took responsibility for development of labour colonies and

construction of quarters in the city Under the subsidized industrial labour housing schemes, 12 labour colonies, 18,620 tenements were constructed from 1952 to 1963

The second type of residential areas for the lower income group is the squatter's areas which are owned by the government or public institutions but occupied by the inhabitants without proper rights They are long strips along the main road, a small patch at the edge of railway yard, marshy land around a drainage reservoir, or open land created by the demolition of old constructions under the slum clearance scheme but not yet utilized for labour housing or other public purposes due to lack of financial resources of the development authority Most of the squatter's shelters are small huts made of mud, and door, windows and roof are often made of scraps of wood, gunny sacks or other waste materials and tiles Usually the earth floor inside the house is lower than the outside ground level, because the hut is constructed on the place from which they dug the mud for making the walls Therefore, in rainy season water pours inside floor

The third type of residential area is found among erst-while rural-settlements which are now surrounded by built-up urban areas or are on the fringe It may be said that the lower income recent migrants from the rural areas tend to settle down in these localities It is here where they can get cheaper accommodation and more easily adapt themselves to the environment, which, more or less, still preserves rural characters Of course, there are some residents who have shifted from the old city area in search of cheaper accommodation

Only recently the administrative service of the municipal authority has been extended to some of these localities, but in most cases no drinking water supply, no electricity, no sewerage and no garbage service are available

The last type of residential area is the old slum areas, including ahatas situated in the central parts of the city. In the report for 1948, the Kanpur Development Board said that 81,825 persons were living in 455 ahatas or tenement houses. In the same year the Municipal Medical Officers of Health revealed that 123,755 persons lived in 812 ahatas where there were 33,385 rooms. Quoting these figures, Singh estimated that 20 per cent of the city's population lived in the slums in 1948 (Singh, 1972 53-54). More recently, Badami's approximate calculation reveals that the slum population is around 5 lakhs, more than 30 per cent of the total population in the middle of the 1970's (Badami, 1976, See Table 3.5).

It must be noted that Kanpur slums are different from those found elsewhere in Indian cities. In Delhi, they are known as Katras (B. S. S., 1958), that is, 'a group, usually, of single room tenements, constructed normally in rows to capacity, within a compound or enclosure having a single common entrance'. In contrast, 'a basti is located on quite open areas in the outer wards of the city — and can be described as a thick cluster of small Kachcha houses or huts built on open land, often in an unauthorized manner' (Singh and de'Souza, 1980 6).

In Bombay, the slum houses are distinguished as Chawls, Patra-Chawls, and Zopadpatti. Chawls are permanent multi-storeyed buildings built long ago according to the standard

Table ' 3 5

Estimated Number of Slum-Dwellers by Occupation in Kanpur

Occupation	Estimated population	Monthly income (Rs )
1 Mill workers	70,000 (14)	300 to 400
2 Factory workers	60,000 (12)	250 to 300
3 Government employees	30,000 (6)	200 to 275
4 Commercial establishments	1,20,000 (24)	150 to 200
5 Rickshaw pedallers	50,000 (10)	150 to 240
6 Vendors, thelewalas	50,000 (10)	150 to 200
7 Unskilled building workers	10,000 (2)	125 to 150
8 Skilled building workers	5,000 (1)	300 to 350
9 Other services	1,05,000 (21)	125 to 200
Total	5,00,000	

Source J V Badami, Slums of Kanpur Poor Man's Struggle for Shelter (Kanpur K D A , 1976), p 73

prevailing then but which are in a deteriorated condition today Patra-Chawls are semi-permanent structures, both authorised and unauthorised, often built with corrugated iron sheets or with some such hard material (Patra means tin sheets) Zopadpattis are squatter settlements consisting of hovels made of a variety of hard and soft materials, including wood, rags, tin sheets, mud, and brick (Zopad means hutment)

In the Calcutta Improvement Act of 1911, slums were recognized as bustees The bustee refers to villages or hamlets in the rural areas In Calcutta, the use of the term bustee connotes the rural nature of the housing structures and of the migrants who have always largely inhabited them Bustees of Calcutta are classified into two types First, there are 'registered slums' which are recorded in the assessment books and for which the Calcutta Corporation collects taxes (These taxes are lower than for other types of developed property in the city) To qualify for registration, the total area must be not less than 10 Cottahs (1/6th acre), and the structures must be Kachcha, that is, they should have a roof built without cement, with no more than 18" of the wall of pakka construction Slums not meeting these criteria are 'unregistered slums' (Singh and De'Souza, 1980 9)

Madras slums are called Cheris, which usually consist of mud and thatched huts similar to those of villages or are built of old kerosene tin plates The average hut is eight by six feet and poorly constructed, it collapses easily in rain storms and admits almost no light Gandhi described his visit to the Cheris of Madurai "In all cases they are so low

that you cannot enter without bending double . And in all cases the upkeep of the place is certainly not even to the minimum sanitary standard" (Mamoria, 1960 155-156)

Overcrowding and Congestion Slums of Kanpur are overcrowded In some of the worst Ahatas of Kanpur slums, the density of population is as high as 800 persons per acre Living of more than 10 to 12 persons in a house is a common feature of these slums in both rural as well as in urban areas (Badami, 1976 70)

Population The birth in the slum families are high The flow of rural immigrants into the cities has been also a main cause of population growth in slums Furthermore, the family planning programme has not simmered down to the masses and made any impact on the slum families

Economic Status The manifestation of poverty and all the maladies of life can be seen in the urban slum areas They are mostly daily wage earners, barring those employed in government services and big commercial establishments in urban areas and agricultural labourers, petty shopkeepers in rural areas With the increase in the cost of living it is impossible for them to pay high rent as all their earnings are consumed in their food and addiction

Health and Sanitation The Kanpur slums are very dirty and unclean and the rubbish and garbage dumps go on growing into mounds The municipal authorities are apathetic in the removal of the rubbish dumps and the stench from the open drains. The stagnant pools of sullage attracts swarms of

flies and other pests, which are potential sources for health hazards

The private latrines just do not exist in the majority of houses. Facility of common latrines exist only in a few of the privileged Ahatas. By and large, the urban slum dwellers have to use the public latrines or ease themselves in the open fields. In slums, the lack of street lighting helps them to defecate themselves in the lanes and open drains. Encouraged by elders, the children use the drains for this obnoxious purpose all the twenty four hours of the day. The public latrines are mostly conservancy type which always remain filthy and in insanitary conditions. These are a menace to the locality in which they exist.

Most of the Ahatas depend on the wells for drinking water which are generally contaminated on account of filthy surroundings. Only a small number of Ahatas are lucky to have municipal piped water stand-posts but they are inadequate in number and the pressure on them are also high.

It appears as if the slum dwellers usually lack the knowledge about importance of good health or there are constraints before them.

The urban slums in Kanpur lack medical and hospital facilities and whatever facilities are available they are located far away from these localities. The lack of preventive medicare such as vaccinations and inoculations is a common feature. Whenever they do seek medical aid, they go to "quack" simply because they charge less for their services and drugs.

They hesitate to go to public hospitals because they have to wait hours for treatment

"Adulteration of foods and drugs effect mainly upon poor, undernourished, and uneducated The overcrowded hospitals, non-hygienic conditions, inadequate medical supplies, adulterated drugs, overworked doctors, underpaid staff are remotely controlled and administered by bureaucrats and politicians constitute the medical facilities of our country (Moay, 1982)

Insofar as drug facilities in Kanpur are concerned, here is the finding of one Inquiry Committee "Nearly half of the drug slips issued daily in the hospitals attached to Kanpur Medical College for free disbursement were found to be "fake" during a surprise cross checking of one day's slips by an Inquiry Committee of four doctors The government was being cheated of thousands of rupees by elements, who include the hospital staff, the Committee found" (Statesman, 1982),

Neighbourhood Facilities Poor slum housing in Kanpur are invariably associated with poor civic amenities and community services The lack of parks, recreation centres, lack of schools are common feature in the slum of Kanpur The schools are not at all available in the slums but outside of the slums where slum dwellers do not want to send their children

Deviant Behaviour The prevailing environment of Kanpur slums has been responsible for the degradation in the mental outlook of the slum dwellers in general, but its effect is too serious on the growing children Studies revealed that

the incidence of juvenile-delinquency, crime, prostitution, professional begging, and drug-addiction are associated with slums of Kanpur (Srivastava, 1959)

Apathy and Social Isolation      The nonslum dweller of Kanpur treat inferior to those who live in the slums. This leads to the social isolation of slum dwellers and their exclusion from power and participation in urban society (Chandra, 1966 14)

Spatial Mobility      Kanpur slums are reported to have a high residential mobility, i.e., mobility or movement from one slum area to another depending upon opportunities, rent and job opportunities, etc. But the mobility of a family occupied slum is lower than the slum occupied mainly by homeless males.

The slum is recognized by a sub-culture of its own to which Lewis referred to as the 'culture of poverty' (Lewis, 1961).

Life in the slums is usually gregarious and largely affected by the immediate surroundings of the inhabitants. The slum dwellers usually fail to avail the various public and private facilities such as health services, schooling, playgrounds and parks. There are frequent occurrences of unemployment and low wages among the slum dwellers. Lack of stable employment usually results into the unstable family patterns. The slum inhabitants lack the ability to plan for the future since there is lack of saving or motive to save. These attributes of sub-culture of poverty is passed through

generation to generation Perhaps because of these that the Indian slums are considered to be the worst in the world It is a nauseating and depressing experience to move round the slums of Kanpur One cannot imagine to what low depths the human lives sink, unless one actually sees with one's own eyes the miserable hovels in which they live and die (Badami, 1976 69) The families living in the slums are victims of biological, psychological and social consequences of the physical and social environment (Indian Conference of Social Work, 1957 81)

#### Kanpur Nagar District the Rural Context

been

Kanpur district has now split into Kanpur Dehat and Kanpur Nagar districts The undivided Kanpur district covered an area of 6200 Kilometer square in 1981, and the population of Kanpur district was 3,790,549, out of which 2,007,884 were rural and 1,782,655 urban The total number of females per 1000 males was 834 in 1981 In rural areas this number was 854, while in urban areas 812

Total number of literates in 1981 in Kanpur district as a whole was 1,657,455 among which 689,605 were rural and 967,850 were urban. The total number of male literates was 1,093,413 out of which 492,394 were rural and 601,019 were urban Out of total literates, rural literate females were 197,271 and urban female literates were 366,831

Due to administrative reasons, the Kanpur district was divided into two districts soon after 1981-Census, namely, Kanpur Nagar and Kanpur Dehat districts Our study appertains to the Kanpur Nagar district

Table 3 6

Demographic features of the undivided Kanpur District in 1981

Demographic features	Total	Rural	Urban
1 Population	3,790,549	2,007,884	1,782,665
2 Males	2,067,308	1,083,260	984,048
3 Females	1,723,241	924,624	798,617
4 Females per 1000 males	834	854	812
5 Per cent growth rate of population 1971-81	+26 51	+17.15	+39 02
6 Literates	1,657,455	689,605	967,850
7 Literate males	1,093,413	492,394	601,019
8 Literate females	564,042	197,211	366,831
9 Literates as per cent to total population	43 73	34 34	54.29
10 Male literates as per cent to total population	52 89	45 45	61.08
11 Female literates as per cent to total population	32 73	21 33	45.93

Source P Padmanabha, Census of India, 1981, Series 1, Paper 3 of 1981 Provisional Population Totals Workers and Non-workers

The Kanpur Nagar district has only one sub-division — Tehsil Sadar — consisting of three NES Blocks — Kallanpur, Bidhnu, and Sarsaul. There is a town area, Bithoor, and a multi-million city of Kanpur in it. The total population of Kanpur Nagar district in 1981 was 1,993,870 of which 1,688,242 were in Kanpur urban agglomeration and the remaining 3,05,628 in Tehsil Sadar <sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Courtesy Additional District Magistrate (Finance and Revenue), Kanpur Nagar District, Kanpur

The households selected for the study were from the five villages of Maksudabad Gram Sevak area of NES block Kalianpur of Kanpur Nagar district. Lodhar and Kursauli are of smaller size, while Naurangabad, Loharkheda, and Maksudabad are of relatively large size.

The villages under study are contiguous with each other, the maximum distance between them being barely three kilometers. Maksudabad — the headquarter of the Gram Sevak, is located at a distance of five kilometers from Kalianpur NES Block. Other villages, viz., Lodhar is 4.5 kilometers, Naurangabad 7 kilometers, Kursauli 5.5 kilometers, and Loharkheda 8 kilometers away from the block headquarter. Kalianpur itself is 10 kilometers away from the district court Kanpur. The total area of Kursauli is 273, of Lodhar 472, of Naurangabad 286, of Loharkheda 232 and of Maksudabad 964 hectares.

The climate of the villages is the same as that of Kanpur City about which a brief reference was made earlier.

The villages have alluvial soil. The agriculture is the main occupation of the people. Main crops are wheat, rice, and gram. The potato and sugarcane are grown mainly as cash crops.

The means of irrigation in villages are mainly wells and canal. In most of the cases these two means of irrigation have been reported.

The population of the villages vary according to its size. The largest village is Maksudabad having a population of 1287 out of which 699 are males and 588 are females. Remaining four villages, i.e., Naurangabad, Kursauli, Lodhar and Loharkheda have a population of 553, 520, 454, and 337, respectively.

Table 3 7

## Demographic Features of the Five Selected Villages

Village	Area (Hectare)	Population			
		Total	Males	Females	Landless house- holds
Kursauli	273	520	284	236	62
Lodhar	472	454	236	218	15
Naurangabad	206	553	295	258	32
Loharkheda	232	337	173	164	35
Maksudabad	964	1287	699	588	52

(Source By Courtesy of Gram Sevak, Kallanpur Block)

All the selected villages are surrounded by cultivable lands. Hence they could be approached only by road on foot through the embankments of the agricultural fields. However, Maksudabad and Naurangabad are in somewhat advantageous position than the other three as they are located on Kallanpur to Shivali Marg which permits easy access in them. Barring rainy season, the bullock-cart is used in all the villages for transportation of goods. These villages are also accessible by other transport facilities such as cycles, jeeps, tractors, etc., but not without difficulty. Hence the inhabitants of these villages face problems in movement for want of proper transport facilities.

Language of the inhabitants in the villages is the same as we have mentioned earlier but not in a standardized form. It is Hindi language which pervades among them.

In all the villages, the solidarity of caste is strong. This has resulted in rivalries between various castes with differing interest and development of relations beyond the

boundaries of their caste. Various types of relations are easily experienced. One can witness the relationship between landowner and landless, master and servant, creditor and debtor, and patron and client, to cite a few.

The religion pervades all aspects of rural life, be it building of a house, address to people, marriage, food, drink, work, or caste (Srinivas, 1969, Kapp, 1963 21-40). Marriott rightly writes that the religious traditions of the village may be conceived "as resulting from continuous process of communication between a little, local traditions and greater traditions which have their places partly inside and partly outside the village". The major religious group in these villages is that of Hindus, Islam religious group is in minority.

The main administrative systems with which villages are tied are Nyaya Panchayat, Tehsil, NES Block, and District Board, among others. Each village has its own Gram Panchayat which is headed by an elected Sarpanch or Gram Pradhan.

The commonest type of dwellings found in these villages are huts and kachcha houses. The walls of the huts are made of mud or wattle-screen and plastered with mud. The roof is always thatched. The hut is built in a small enclosure and has generally only one room, from which the kitchen is partly partitioned. Village houses are generally dark, damp, ill-ventilated and insanitary. The roof is low and built with flimsy materials, without adequate slopes. Windows are conspicuous by their absence. The floor level is sometimes even below the adjoining ground level. The waste water from the

kitchen is allowed to accumulate near the house and breeds mosquitoes. Human beings and cows, buffaloes, bullocks and goats live together in close proximity. These dwellings have very little furniture and all household utensils are the wares of the local potter. The few metal utensils, which they possess, are among the most treasured parts of the household property (Dube, 1955: 30).

In none of these villages is a doctor or a government health unit. In lack of these facilities, they used to go to quacks and other sorts of home-made treatments. The lack of basic amenities such as drinking water, village sanitation and electricity is a common feature of these villages.

The main economic activities of the inhabitants in these villages are linked with the agriculture either in terms of agriculture ownership, agriculture labourer, petty shopkeepers, or other sorts of menial jobs. The reason is that agriculture is the basis of the economy, and the artisans, traders, and all the remaining people serve some interests of the agricultural population.

The number of landless people is relatively high in the villages. For instance, in Kursauli 62, Lodhar 15, Naurangabad 22, Loharkheda 35 and Maksudabad 52 households are landless. Those who are having land, they are either small farmers or marginal peasants. In lack of the basic infrastructure, therefore, the people engage in labour job or some other kind of manual jobs related to agriculture.

The villages have, by and large, joint patrilocal family both among Hindus and Muslims. The head of the family is the

deciding authority Many families in these villages are, however, of nuclear type or smaller size consisting of parents and unmarried children The separation of the joint families generally takes place when the parents are dead

The overcrowding and congestion though exist in rural areas too but are relatively low if compared with the urban areas The density of population in a house comes to 5 to 6 persons on average The lack of privacy results from the large number of members living in one or two rooms tenements

There is lack of civic amenities in the neighbourhood The lack of post-offices and schools are the common features of these villages However, in Naurangabad and Maksudabad, there is a primary school There is no public place in the villages such as parks and play grounds Long ago Mahatma Gandhi said about village India "Instead of having graceful hamlets dotting the land, we have dung-heaps. The approach to many villages is not a refreshing experience, obviously one would like to shut one's eyes and stuff one's nose, such is the surrounding dirt and offending smell" (Gandhi, 1947 134) This still holds true to these villages There is no latrine in any household So the village residents use/prefer open field for latrine which is fairly near their homes Small children practically always defecate immediately outside their homes and the human excreta is thrown on the refuse heaps lying in the lanes. People commonly do not prefer latrines for various reasons such as smell and dirt, use by others for defecation, and caste pollution The general attitude of the people towards human feces are intense, and negative However,

the open air and sunshine of the village ameliorate some of the unsanitary conditions

The people living in the villages are generally illiterate. They have little or no concern about the wider affairs of the nation. In a way they are shy with the outer world and remain excluded. In psychological terms, all this results in apathy and social isolation.

In the rural areas, people move from one village to another for their needs for a short duration or hours. Sometimes they do move to cities for economic, administrative, or for other jobs, but such movements are less frequent.

The villagers exhibit their own culture, habits, and customs. The interplay of several different kinds of solidarities determines the structure and organization of Indian village communities. Kinship, caste, and territorial affinities are the major determinants that shape the social structure of these communities. The caste divisions are regarded as divinely ordained. In inter-group relations the caste structure works according to a set pattern of principles which manifest and express themselves in rules and regulations that are calculated to avoid ritual pollution and maintain ritual purity.

In the foregoing discussion the picture of the rural and urban setting of the study has been presented. In so doing, an attempt has been made to describe the location, flora and fauna, climate, language, transportation, etc., of Kanpur city and of Kanpur Nagar district, with special reference to the selected villages. The distinction has also been

drawn between rural and urban slums on the basis of a set of characteristics such as housing condition, population, overcrowding and congestion, health and sanitation, neighbourhood facilities, economic activities, apathy and social isolation, mobility, and way of life. It was found that the two settings differ much from each other, although there are similarities on several counts.

It transpires that a large number of population in the slums in the Kanpur city lives <sup>in</sup> one-roomed and very few in two-roomed houses. Most of these houses have no windows and no latrines, reflecting the appalling conditions of jhuggis and Ahatas. In heavy rains, these houses become waterlogged. The grim realities of the real urban Kanpur can be seen in the squatter colonies and slums. No matter how ugly these slums look to the non-poor, they still look attractive to the unemployed villager and the poor (cf. Aiyer, 1984).

Physical living conditions in villages are as bad as in urban slums. Most of the villagers too live in a single roomed house. The houses the poor live in are just mud structures. Sanitary conditions are awful and there are no health facilities comparable to those in Kanpur city. There is far more social distance between the high and the low caste in villages than in urban areas. Also, there are lesser opportunities for employment, education, and social progress for the village poor than that of their counterparts in the Kanpur city.

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PART II

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ECONOMIC COMPONENT

OCCUPATION

INCOME AND ASSETS

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## CHAPTER FOUR

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### OCCUPATION

The centrality of an individual's occupation to his life is a well recognized fact "The occupations of the people influence directly their lives, their customs, their institutions — indeed, their very numbers ." (Edwards, 1943 XI) and serve as a major link between the individual and society, for, they are related with social status, education, political involvement, and family life To be sure, the occupations are not only central to the individual's life, but "the occupational structures of a society are integrally related to the social organization of that society" (Taylor, 1968 19)

Although the agreement is not perfect among scholars about the meaning of occupation (Tilgher, 1931, Arendet, 1958), even then the occupation connotes three sets of conditions technological, economic, and social Understood in this sense, occupation is "specific activity with a market value which an individual continually pursues for the purpose of obtaining a steady flow of income, this activity also determines the social position of the individual" (Salz, 1933, II,424) Sociologically speaking, "occupation involves a degree of corporateness, a degree of consciousness of kind, and reciprocity between the acting individuals in the occupation and the recognition of these individuals in the occupation on the part of the larger society" (Taylor, 1968 9). Precisely put, occupation refers to the social role of an

adult member of a society which, in turn, ensures steady income and determines social status of the role performer. Work in occupation is more limited, precise, and specific and jobs may be distinguished as having high degree of specificity (Taylor, 1968)

The people work with different incentives or motivations (Morse and Weiss, 1955: 192) as also the work has different motivations for the people at different levels of the occupational hierarchy or for the people from different social origins. Incentives for work are both economic and non-economic. Vroom discerns five important motivations behind work: (1) wages, including all of the various sorts of financial remunerations associated with the term fringe benefits; (2) expenditure of the physical and/or mental energy; (3) the production of goods and services, including the intrinsic satisfaction a person derives from successfully manipulating some part of his environment; (4) social interaction, and (5) social status (Vroom, 1964: 30-39)

The last incentive for work — social status — has various implications as it refers to the occupation's relationship with social stratification. For example, "Classes are generally viewed as largely determined by occupations" (Wright, 1980: 177). And, "the backbone of the class structure, and, indeed, of the entire reward system of modern western society, is the occupational order. Other sources of economic and symbolic advantage do coexist alongside the occupational order, but for the vast majority of the population these tend, at best, to be secondary to those deriving

from the division of labour" (Parkin, 1971 18)

"In the absence of hereditary castes or feudal estates", say Blau and Duncan, "class differences come to rest primarily on occupation positions and the economic advantages and powers associated with them" (Blau and Duncan, 1967 VII, See also Reiss, 1961 83-84, Caplow, 1954 30) Although these non-Marxist stances towards the relationship between occupation and class are totally different from those of Marxist theory, empirically class can revolve around the occupational groupings <sup>1</sup>

There are various characteristics of occupations which contribute to the various rankings Important among these are (1) the nature of work being performed a simple differentiation here is whether the occupation involves the manipulation of physical objects, symbols, or other people, (2) prerequisites of entry the amount of training required, the presence of certification or licensing procedures, and the experience needed, (3) whether the task is performed on an individual or group basis, (4) the place of an occupation within the interpersonal relationship structure on the job, and (5) work situation The configuration of these work and work situation attributes determines the status given to an occupation The work related attributes tend to be more universal and the situational conditions operate at the local level

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<sup>1</sup>In Marxist theory, "occupations are understood as positions defined within the technical relations of production, classes, on the other hand, are defined by the social relations of production" (Wright, 1980 177).

Occupation is, therefore, a significant component for measuring and identifying rural and <sup>urban</sup> poverty. An analysis of occupation of the poor will reflect not only the source and amount of their income but also the incentives to work, working conditions, job environment and hierarchy of the occupations. Our focus here will be on the following five interrelated aspects of occupational component: (1) occupation and the social structure, (2) occupational mobility, (3) entry to occupation, (4) job satisfaction, and (5) unemployment.

#### OCCUPATION AND THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

One of the lasting intellectual debates has hovered around the theme whether changes in the social structure have led to changes in values or whether value changes must occur before the structure can change (Marx, 1946, Weber, 1935: 37-78). Without suggesting a priority, it can be said that changes in both structure and values have occurred that have an impact on contemporary occupations. In the modern society, the occupational entry and the occupational success depend on two factors: social origins and individual's quality. "A man's social origins exert a considerable influence on his chances of occupational success" and "his own training and early experience exert a more pronounced influence on his success chances" (Blau and Duncan, 1967: 402-403). Likewise, the entry to an occupation depends on one's education or training and the experience (Caplow, 1954: 44). Thus, the social origins,

education and training, and career origins are interrelated (Blau and Duncan, 1967 402-403) Simply stated, social origins have a continuing impact on both entry and success in an occupation With this prologue, let us look at the occupations of the poor

### MAIN OCCUPATION OF THE POOR

The main occupation of the head of the household is the one from which he derives a major share of income However, in case of rural India, this is not applicable in toto as the formal head of the household is, at times, a retired person not gainfully employed in any occupation As an alternative, every household in the sample is assigned an occupation on the basis of the source of income which contributed maximum to the household income

Various occupational classifications have been adopted in the study of occupation in this country (see, for example, NCAER, 1965, II 12) and abroad (see, for example, Moser and Hall, 1954 29-50, Coutu, 1936, Davis, 1952, Hyman, 1942, Hall and Jones, 1950, Congalton, 1953, Taft, 1953, Reiss, 1961 263-275) Since these classifications of occupation belong to the cross-section of society, they cannot be fitted in the occupational structure of the rural and urban poor due to the special features of their economy Hence, we have adopted our own occupational classification. We have divided occupations in five broad category (1) Petty Cultivator and Agriculture Wage Earner which includes farm labourer, wage workers, landless share cropper, and petty

cultivators — owner and tenants, (2) Non-Agricultural Wage Earner which comprises of skilled and semiskilled workers such as blacksmiths, carpenter, brickmason, painters, potters, etc., factory worker, common labourer such as shoe makers and repairers, coolies, etc, and domestic servant, (3) Self-Employed Petty Businessmen which covers vendor, petty shop-keeper and salesman, (4) Salary Earners which consists of attendants and assistants, messengers, peon and kindred worker, clerical and kindred worker, and (5) Non-gainfully Employed which includes rickshaw-puller, gardner, watchmen, stone-breaker, etc Table 4.1 summarizes the occupational distribution of the head of the household

Table 4.1

Rural-urban background and the main occupation  
of the poor, in per cent

Main Occupation	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Petty cultivation and agriculture wage earner	84 0*	0.0	31 4
Non-agriculture wage earner	15 3	68 4*	48 5
Self-employed petty businessmen	0 7	12 0	7 8
Salary earners	0 0	0 4	0 3
Not gainfully occupied	0 0	19 2	12 0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

\*Significant at 01 Level of Probability

The occupation in the case of 48.5 per cent of the households is represented by non-agricultural wage earner. The percentage of the households representing agricultural wage earners and petty cultivators is 31.4. Nearly 80 per cent households belong to the category of self-employed persons in business, crafts and professions. The households in the salary-earner-class account for 0.3 per cent. The households not gainfully occupied are of the order of 12.0 per cent.

The proportion of (heads of) families of the rural and urban poor following different occupations seems to provide an important contrast between them. As should be expected, the proportion of families engaged in petty farming and related labour activities is significantly higher in the rural than in the urban areas (84.0 per cent vs. zero per cent). Over 68.0 per cent of families in urban areas are engaged in non-agricultural wage earner's job, whereas this proportion is slightly over 15.0 per cent for the rural areas. Twelve per cent of families are self-employed in petty business and sale service in the urban areas, whereas this proportion is under one per cent for the rural areas. The proportion of 'not gainfully occupied' and salary earners is also higher for the urban areas than for the rural areas.

The contrast between the occupation of the rural and urban households gives several interesting results. First, it seems that there is greater diversification of employment opportunities in urban than rural areas. For the rural poor, the agriculture and allied work is still a major source of

employment Secondly, the poor whether rural or urban, have only very limited options before them in terms of occupation From the income viewpoint, the occupations in which the poor are engaged are not good

The distinction between the occupations of the rural and the urban poor is marked and significant In other ways, the rural poor are primarily engaged in petty cultivation and agricultural labours' job, and the urban poor mainly in non-agricultural labour Its sole reason is the job opportunities available in two differing backgrounds

#### Activity Status of the Poor

If we look at the data in Table 4.1 again from the viewpoint of the status of the activities the poor perform, it may be divided into two categories those who work for others (employee), and those who work for themselves (self-employed) The poor working for themselves constitute only 7.8 per cent of the total, of which 12.0 per cent are urban and 0.7 per cent rural That is to say, only a small proportion from both rural and urban groups may be said to be self-employed, having control over their economy, and being in a position to take decision However, many self-employed poor are perhaps unable to take wage employment for reasons of health (Rogers, 1976 261-276) As against this, the poor who work for others constitute 92.2 per cent of the total of which over 99.0 per cent are rural and 92.0 per cent urban The lack of self tenancy and of employment opportunities in non-farming occupations in rural areas

speaks volume about the economic condition of the poor. It also transpires that the <sup>percentage</sup>  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the poor as an employee is very low, for, there is only a small proportion in salary earners class (0.03 per cent of total), most of others are agricultural wage earner.

Since most of the poor do not have control over the production processes, they lack the decision-making power too. Conversely, they are controlled by them who hire them on wages. And, in such a situation, the possibility of exploitation of the poor cannot be ruled out. Furthermore, the poor being mainly wage-earner lack capital, land and skills. Also their work generates very little income. Since most of the urban poor are working in the informal sector, they have no union or organization of their own and hence their bargaining power is weak. Likewise, a relatively high proportion of non-cultivator labourers in rural areas earn very little which adversely affects their status.

### Job Instability

We collected information regarding the tenure of poor's job in terms of popular categories of (i) permanent, temporary, casual, and seasonal, and (ii) in number of years put in the present job.

As regards the tenure in terms of holding the job (see Table 4.2), nearly three-fifth of the poor are engaged in the works which are either seasonal (39.5 per cent), daily-wage (30.3 per cent) or temporary (4.6 per cent). Only one-fourth of them (25.3 per cent) have a permanent employment.

Table 4.2

Nature of the tenure of job held by the poor, in per cent

Tenure of Occupation	Rural poor	Urban poor	Rural + Urban poor
Seasonal	99.3	3.6	39.5
Dailywage	0.0	48.4	30.3
Permanent	0.0	40.4	25.3
Temporary	0.7	7.2	4.6
Cannot say	0.0	0.4	0.3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

In rural areas, there is no concept of a permanent job, nearly cent-per-cent poor (99.3 per cent) work on seasonal basis. In urban areas, however, 40.4 per cent poor hold permanent jobs.

This, then, shows that most of the poor, irrespective of their background, do not have any permanent job and regular source of earning. However, more urban than rural poor have a permanent job and regular source of income. The irregular source of income and casual, daily-paid employment threaten the security level of the poor (cf., Rogers, 1979).

Coming to the length of the service of the poor. The majority of the poor (91.7 per cent) are engaged in the present occupation for over three years. As against this, 6.5 per cent poor are engaged in this job for 1-3 years, and 1.8 per cent for less than a year. Barring exceptions, cent-per-cent rural poor are engaged in this very occupation for

over three years, while only over 87 per cent urban poor are engaged in the present occupation for this period. Over 10 0 per cent urban poor are working in this occupation from one to three years and 2 4 per cent for less than a year

This shows that urban poor have a tendency to change their jobs relatively more frequently whereas the rural poor stick to their jobs for a longer time. Perhaps the urban poor get more chances to change occupation in the city whereas the rural poor lack such opportunities

If one accepts the suggestion of Miller and Form that three and more years represent permanent (Miller and Form, 1964 539-604), then it could be concluded that the majority of the poor are in permanent job. Moreover, since the poor have no alternative but to work where they work, is, of course, a kind of permanent set of work for them

Table 4.3

Duration of the poor's stay in the present occupation,  
in per cent

Duration	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 year-and-less	0.7	2.4	1.8
1-3 years	0.0	10.4	6.5
3 years-and-above	99.3	87.2	91.7
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

### SUPPLEMENTARY OCCUPATION OF THE POOR

It is but natural for the poor to engage in some subsidiary occupation besides their main occupation in order to supplement their earning, if there is a job for them and the time and energy so permit. The data in Table 4.4 shows that as many as 63.3 per cent poor do not have any subsidiary occupation. However, a significant percentage of them (36.7 per cent) do engage in some additional work in order to supplement their income.

Table 4.4

Supplementary occupation of the poor, in per cent

Subsidiary Occupation	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 Hawker	1.3	2.4	2.0
2 Manual worker	29.3	12.0	18.4
3 Petty shopkeeper and salesman	38.7	0.8	15.0
4 Domestic servant	2.7	0.4	1.3
5 No other work to do	28.0	84.4	63.3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

It is interesting to find that more rural than urban poor engage in subsidiary works (72.0 vs 15.6 per cent). In rural areas the poor are either self-employed as a petty shopkeepers or a salesman in the shop (38.7 per cent) or manual worker (29.3 per cent). Some rural poor work as domestic labour (2.7 per cent) or hawker (1.3 per cent).

This then shows that the rural poor go in for a variety of alternative jobs for their survival. By contrast, the urban poor work mostly as manual labour (12.0 per cent). A small percentage of them are hawker (2.4 per cent), petty shopkeepers or salesman in someone else's shops (0.8 per cent) or domestic servant (0.4 per cent).

It may, then, be concluded that more rural than urban poor engage in some subsidiary occupation to supplement their income.

Let us now look at the relationship between the social characteristics, namely, income, education, and caste, and the main occupation of the poor. Table 4.5 summarizes the relevant information.

The majority of the rural poor in all income-brackets have their main occupation of petty cultivation and agriculture wage earning. In contradiction to this, a larger proportion of the urban poor in the income bracket of Rs. 200-and-less is self-employed/petty businessmen, and in the income bracket of Rs. 200-300-and-above is non-agriculture wage earner. This suggests that the urban poor are slightly economically well-off as compared to their rural counterparts.

A close look at the relationship between education and main occupation of the poor reveals that the lower is the education higher is the entry to lower level occupations and that whatever be the compulsions, even the higher education of the poor in most cases becomes valueless. From the viewpoint of entry to occupations as they had to go in for the lower level occupations. There is one exception, however, in

Table 4 5

Social characteristics and the main occupation of the poor, in per cent

Socio-cultural Variables	Main Occupation of the Poor									
	Rural Poor					Urban Poor				
	Petty Cultivator and Agriculture Wage Earner	Non-agriculture Wage Earner	Self-employed/ Petty Business- men	Salary Earners	Not Gainfully Occupied	Petty Cultivator and Agriculture Wage Earner	Non-agriculture Wage Earner	Self-employed/ Petty Business- men	Salary Earners	Not Gainfully Occupied
Income bracket										
Rs.200-and-less	68.6	31.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	44.1	47.7	0.0	38.2
Rs.200-300	98.7	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	67.0	13.7	0.0	19.3
Rs.300-and-above	80.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	81.6	6.6	1.3	10.5
Number of cases										
					(70)					(34)
					(75)					(140)
					(5)					(76)
					(150)					(250)
Education										
Low	81.7	17.6	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	70.0	11.0	0.0	19.0
High	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	56.5	17.4	4.3	21.8
Number of cases										
					(131)					(226)
					(19)					(24)
					(150)					(250)
Caste										
High	87.3	12.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	57.9	26.3	0.0	15.8
Low	81.0	17.9	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	70.1	9.4	0.5	20.0
- <sup>1</sup>										
Number of cases										
					(12)					(7)
					(20)					(47)
					(32)					(50)

the sense that a small proportion of the higher educated urban, as against rural poor, has been able to get entry into service or carry on their own business for their survival

In the rural areas, whether of high-, or of low caste, the main occupation remains petty cultivation and agriculture wage earning activities. In urban areas, on the other hand, the majority of all the two caste categories are non-agricultural wage earner. One interesting feature is that more high caste than low-caste poor are self-employed, and more low caste poor are salary earner. Even among those who are not gainfully occupied, the low caste poor outnumber the high caste poor. This, then, suggests that relatively larger proportion of the poor belonging to the low caste depend on lower level occupation

## 2 Occupational Mobility

In what has gone before, we have analysed the nature of occupation the poor are engaged in. Let us now look at the extent of their occupational mobility. Mobility refers to the "forces by which the individuals move from one position to another in society, positions which by general consent have been given specific hierarchical value" (Lipset and Bendix, 1959 1-2). In the study of social mobility, "we analyse the movement of individuals from positions possessing a certain rank to positions either higher or lower in the social system" (Lipset and Bendix, 1959 1-2).

The occupation mobility may be approached on the basis of a number of dimensions (Caplow, 1954 59-99, Sorokin, 1927, 1959, Tumin, 1967, Pandey, 1982) We have analysed the mobility on the basis of the two dimensions time and direction. The time-phase dimension involves two types of mobility intergenerational and intragenerational. Similarly the direction dimension refers to two types of mobility vertical and horizontal. While each of these axes is analytically distinct, they are frequently related in reality.

#### Intragenerational Occupation Mobility

Intragenerational vertical mobility can take a variety of forms. First, a change in occupation has been a traditional means of moving up in the stratification system. Yet, it is infrequent due to several limitations on the opportunities for such occupational shifts. For instance, trained people seldom change their occupations, for, they will lose their educational investment. Seniority and tenure also diminish the chances of occupational change. However, the occupational changes may be fairly common for white-collar and blue-collar workers. The more lower the job, more the chances of shift in occupations. In most cases, however, such occupational changes do not involve much vertical mobility. Secondly, intragenerational mobility takes place in the form of promotion or demotion within an organizational hierarchy. Finally, mobility within a generation is associated with a normal career. Within an occupation, there is

generally a normal progression. Let us look at the intra-generational occupational mobility of the poor.

A glimpse of the occupations the poor were engaged in prior to switching over to the present occupation may be had from Table 4.6. Nearly 45.0 per cent of the poor were petty cultivators and agricultural wage earners and over 36.0 per cent were non-agricultural wage earners. The percentage of self-employed was only 7.3 per cent. Nearly 11.0 per cent were not gainfully occupied.

Table 4.6

The main occupation of the poor prior to the present one,  
in per cent

Previous Occupation	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 Petty cultivators and agricultural wage earner	84.0	22.8	45.6
2 Non-agricultural wage-earners	15.3	48.8	36.3
3 Not gainfully occupied	0.0	17.2	10.8
4 Self-employed in petty business	0.7	11.2	7.3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

The two main occupations for the rural poor were petty cultivation and agricultural labour (84.0 per cent) and non-agricultural labour (15.3 per cent). The urban poor, by contrast, were engaged as labour (48.8 per cent) and petty cultivator and agricultural labour (22.8 per cent). There

were 7.3 per cent self-employed poor in urban areas as against 0.7 per cent in rural areas. Over 17.2 per cent urban poor were then not gainfully occupied.

If Table 4.1 and Table 4.6 are compared, two interesting results come out. First, 22.8 per cent urban poor are migrant from the rural areas whose earlier occupation was petty cultivation and agricultural labour. Secondly, the proportion of those not gainfully employed has been reduced. This does show the occupational shift but does not necessarily involve much vertical mobility.

#### Reasons for Leaving the Previous Occupation

As is evident from Table 4.7, the main reasons for changing the occupation is financial. Earlier occupation, the poor say, fetched less income (30.4 per cent). The second important reason for the occupational change is the nature of work. The previous one was a hard work (2.8 per cent). One out of every eleven poor (9.0 per cent) changed their jobs due to other reasons, important among them being retirement, better job, domestic reasons, and loss in business.

Barring exceptions, almost cent per cent rural poor are carrying on the occupation they were engaged earlier. But the urban poor changed the jobs more frequently for monetary gain (48.8 per cent). Secondly, they changed their occupation in order to escape from the hard labour of the earlier job (4.4 per cent). There are other reasons also which compelled 14.4 per cent urban poor to change their job.

Table 4 7

Reasons for leaving the earlier occupation, in per cent

Reasons	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
No change	99 3	32 4	60 0
Less income	0 0	48 8	30 4
Hard-working	0 0	4 4	2 8
Other reasons	0 7	14 4	6 8
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

It transpires then that the rural poor have no scope to change their job, whereas the urban poor visualize better avenues for occupational shift with the hope to get relatively more money and lighter work

We next asked about the time the poor took in changing their occupation. Over 68 0 per cent urban poor were able to change their jobs within less than a year, while 31 2 per cent took more than a year. It shows that sufficient time is needed in managing to get another job should the poor decide to leave the occupation they are engaged in

#### Intergenerational Occupational Mobility

High rates of intergenerational mobility are often taken as indicator of an open stratification system, exceptions being occupational inheritance which indicates a low degree of mobility while independent professionals, proprietors and farmers "neither supply to other careers in the next

generation nor recruit from others in the last" (Blau and Duncan, 1967 76), the lower level blue-collar and white-collar occupations supply a disproportionate amount of manpower to the occupational system. The occupations at the upper echelons have expanded, while those at the bottom have contracted. We would expect that the jobs of the poor in India has not expanded from the upward mobility viewpoint.

One usual component of the measurement of intergenerational mobility is father's occupation. The respondent is asked his own occupation and then that of his father. Differences between the socio-economic standing of each are taken to the gross indicators of mobility. This method is not free from shortcomings. First, at any point of time, sons and fathers are at different periods in their career. Secondly, labour force itself changes in composition and some occupations decline and some grow. Thirdly, the status of occupations change. However, we adopted this method and made comparison of the major occupation of both sons and their fathers. This will, we thought, tell about the social origins of the sons. Obviously, intergenerational and intragenerational mobility are interrelated. If a person moves up or down from his social origins he is exhibiting both kinds of mobility.

The majority of both rural and urban poor's fathers are/were petty cultivators and agricultural wage earners (89.3 vs. 86.0 per cent). As against this, only over 8.0 per cent poor's fathers are/were non-agricultural wage-earners, here urban poor's fathers outnumber the rural poor's fathers.

There is almost similarity between the poor's fathers who are/were self-employed petty businessmen (nearly 30 per cent each). Similar is the situation in case of those "not gainfully occupied" (1.3 per cent rural and 0.8 per cent urban). Salary earner poor's fathers are/were exclusively in urban areas.

If we make a comparison between the occupation of the poor (Table 4.1) and their fathers (Table 4.8), an interesting contrast emerges. While no urban poor now is a petty cultivator and/or agricultural wage earner, 86.0 per cent of their fathers are/were in this occupation. In case of the rural poor also, the percentage of fathers working as petty cultivators and/or agricultural wage earner is/was higher than their sons (89.3 vs. 84.0 per cent). On the other hand, the proportion of those working as non-agricultural worker has increased during the time of sons as compared to their fathers in both rural (15.3 vs. 6.7 per cent) and urban (68.4 vs. 9.2 per cent) areas. The fathers are/were in a lesser proportion as self-employed petty businessmen as compared to their sons in urban areas (2.8 vs. 12.0 per cent), but are/were more so in case of rural areas (2.7 vs. 0.7 per cent). The percentage of urban salary earner sons has now gone slightly down than their fathers (1.2 vs. 0.4 per cent). Of interest, today, sons in urban areas are relatively more not gainfully occupied in comparison to their fathers (19.2 vs. 0.8 per cent). In case of the rural poor, the situation was reverse more fathers were not gainfully employed than their sons (1.3 vs. zero per cent).

Table 4 8

Occupation of poor's fathers, in per cent

Occupation of Father	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 Petty cultivator and/or agriculture wage-earner	89 3	86 0	87 0
2 Non-agriculture wage- earner	6 7	9 2	8 2
3 Self-employed petty busi- nessmen	2 7	2 8	2 7
4 Salary earners	0.0	1 2	0 8
5 Not gainfully employed	1.3	0 8	1 0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

Some interesting results come out of this comparison. First, the urban poor of the day are the migrant from the rural areas. Secondly, the urban poor are less gainfully employed in comparison of their fathers. Thirdly, there are now more non-agricultural workers among both rural and urban poor than that of their fathers' time.

If our analysis has proceeded correctly, it is clear that poor social origins of father exerted a considerable influence on the occupational success of their sons. The sons followed fathers in matters of occupational achievement. There seems to be a tendency of occupational inheritance, and whatever movement is, it is into adjacent occupational status categories, for, the occupation of sons tallies well with those of their fathers'.

Table 4.9

Intergenerational occupational mobility of the poor, in per cent

Occupation of the Sons	Occupation of the Father									
	Rural Poor					Urban Poor				
	Petty Cultivator and Agriculture Wage Earner	Non-agriculture Wage Earner	Self-employed/Petty Businessmen	Salary Earner	Not Gainfully Occupied	Petty Cultivator and Agriculture Wage Earner	Non-agriculture Wage Earner	Self-employed/Petty Businessmen	Salary Earner	Not Gainfully Occupied
	Cases	Cases	Cases	Cases	Cases	Cases	Cases	Cases	Cases	Cases
Petty cultivator and agriculture wage earner	89 7	6.3	2 4	0.0	1 6	(126)	0 0	0.0	0 0	0.0
Non-agriculture wage earner	87 0	8 7	4.3	0 0	0.0	(23)	85 5	8.2	4.1	1 1
Self-employed/petty businessmen	100.0	0.0	0.0	0 0	0.0	(1)	90 0	10 0	0.0	0.0
Salary earner	0.0	0 0	0.0	0.0	0 0	(0)	100 0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not gainfully occupied	0.0	0 0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(0)	85.4	12.5	0 0	2 1
Number of cases						(150)				(250)

How the poor feel about the occupation and occupational mobility could be glimpsed by the comments made by informants during the course of interview. Here are two typical examples one of our rural informant said

"Bap harwah and Beta charwah"

(the father ploughs the field, the son grazes the cattle)

Similarly an urban interviewer remarked

"Bhag mein wahi pesha likha hai jo baap dada karate rahe hain"

(Luck would have that we are doing the same job which our father and forefather have been doing)

The occupation of sons (see Table 4.1) and their father's occupation (see Table 4.8) have been crossed together to have a clear-cut comparative picture of the intergenerational mobility. As Table 4.9 shows, there is less occupational mobility between generations among the rural poor. The rural sons' fathers (89.7 per cent) were engaged in petty cultivation and agriculture wage earning, in which now most of the rural sons (84.0 per cent) are. In case of the urban poor, the situation is different. Most of the urban sons' fathers (85.5 per cent) were petty cultivator and agriculture wage earner, but the sons (zero per cent) are now not involved in same occupations, rather they are dispersed. This indicates that the intragenerational occupational mobility is higher among the urban than among the rural poor.

#### Chances of Getting Job after Migration

The spatial mobility is generally closely related to vertical mobility. Blau and Duncan observe that "immigration

has in recent decades become increasingly effective as a selective mechanism by which the more able are channelled to places where their potential can be realized" (Duncan, 1967 274) Spatial mobility has, in many ways, become a prerequisite for vertical mobility The obvious exception is the self-employed professional, proprietor, or farmer (Ladinsky, 1967) Another exception is the rural migrant to the large city who is likely to fare more poorly than the native of the large city or his rural counterparts who do not move (Blau and Duncan, 1967 272)

The rural poor have no spatial mobility, they are working in the same occupation at the same place However, some of them have migrated to the city After the migration to cities, the immediate question before them arises of earning a living We tried to know how long the migrants have to wait in order to get a job The data in Table 4 10 shows that over 59 6 per cent urban poor managed to get a job immediately after coming to the city However, nearly 32 0 per cent poor have to wait for a year

It appears, then, that getting a job for the migrants is easier for many but difficult for some However, if we look back at the variety of jobs the poor do, it is not difficult to understand why did many get a job in the city immediately The fact is that the jobs poor are able to get are of such a nature that only poor can do These jobs are mainly in informal sector, carry lesser reward, and are looked down upon by the nonpoor in the society Those who have to

Table 4 10

Time taken in getting a job after migrating  
to the city, in per cent

Time Taken	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Immediately	0 0	59 6	37 2
Within six months	0.0	26 4	16 5
Over six months	0 7	5 2	3 5
Not applicable	99 3	8 8	42 8
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

wait for longer time were perhaps those who were not ready to accept these jobs

### 3 Entry to the Occupations

The entry to the occupations has invited much controversy in the study of stratification. Davis and Moore argued that the system of rewards acts as inducements to fill positions. There is a "differential scarcity of personnel" which restricts entry to occupations (Parsons, 1940 841-862, Davis and Moore, 1945 242-249). The more scarce the personnel and the more difficult and important the position, the higher the rewards must be. The Davis-Moore "theory" thus involves consideration of differential importance of the positions in the society, variations in the requirements of the positions and differences in the kinds of abilities necessary to fill the positions. Tumin (1953 387-394) criticized the Davis-Moore formulation from the standpoint that the potential for locating the best

possible talent for difficult positions are minimized in a stratified society. There is a noticeable tendency for elites to restrict access to their privileged position. Dahrendorf (1959) assumes that those in power will try to remain in power and that the oppressed or less powerful will be in more or less continual conflict with the elite. Keeping these theoretical formulations in view, let us examine the mode of the poor's entry to the occupation.

As the data in Table 4.11 suggests, over 68.0 per cent got the job 'on their own'. The relatives and friends were helpful in managing a job for 26.4 per cent poor. Some have to bribe to get a job (3.8 per cent). The public-agency could provide job for 1.3 per cent poor.

Table 4.11  
Source of getting job, in per cent

Source of Job	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Public agency	0.0	2.0	1.3
On their own	86.0	58.0	68.5
Bribe	0.0	6.0	3.8
Relatives and acquaintances	14.0	34.0	26.4
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

Most of the rural poor (86.0 per cent) got the job on their own. The rest of others got job through the help of relatives and friends. The picture is different in the urban case here only 58.0 per cent managed to get a job of their own. The relatives and acquaintances were able to manage the job. 34.0 per cent urban poor. One out of seventeen urban poor managed to get a job by paying bribe. Least popular source through which the poor were able to get a job is the public agency (2.0 per cent). This shows that bribe and acquaintances are stronger sources of for getting employment, especially in urban areas.

The analysis reveals that the poor have to depend mainly on their own for getting a job. However, relatives and acquaintances do help in a large number of cases. The fact that the poor have to give bribe even to get poor job is of social significance.

It is clear that the entry to occupation is not open for all the poor and that some get entry to the occupations through foul means. It is here where those in power restrict the free entry of the poor. This does not lend credence to Davis-Moore's assertions.

Here are two remarks one each by rural and urban poor on the entry of occupations. One of the rural interviewee remarked

"Bhaiya, kaha jaun, kiske pas jaun meri koi  
jan pahchan nahi hai"

(Brother, I do not know where to go and to whom to go. I have no acquaintance. Nobody listens to me).

Table 4 12

Socio-cultural variables and the poor's entry to occupation, in per cent

Socio-cultural variables	Entry to Occupation							
	Rural Poor				Urban Poor			
	Public Agency	On Their Own	Bribe	Relatives and Acquaintances	Public Agency	On Their Own	Bribe	Relatives and Acquaintances
				Cases				Cases
Income bracket								
Rs.200-and-less	0.0	77.1	0.0	22.9	(70)	0.0	88.2	11.8
Rs.200-300	0.0	94.7	0.0	5.3	(75)	4.3	66.4	28.6
Rs.300-and-above	0.0	80.0	0.0	20.0	(5)	11.8	29.0	54.0
Number of cases				(150)				(250)
Education								
Low	0.0	90.8	0.0	9.2	(131)	5.3	60.2	32.3
High	0.0	52.6	0.0	47.4	(19)	13.0	34.8	52.2
Number of cases				(150)				(250)
Caste								
High	0.0	84.1	0.0	15.9	(12)	10.5	52.6	36.9
Low	0.0	86.9	0.0	13.1	(20)	5.2	58.1	34.1
Number of cases				(32)				(50)

One of the urban informant became emotional and uttered

"Sab chor hain Bina paisa ke koi nahi  
sunata Itana paisa kahan se laun"

(All are thieves None listens without  
paying money, wherefrom to manage that much  
money)

An attempt has been made to analyse the relationship between the income, education, and caste of the poor, and their entry to occupation (see Table 4.12). It is marked that the rural poor who were able to get job on their own are mainly from the lower income group, possess lower level of education, and belong to low castes. By contrast, most of the urban poor who got job on their own come from the lowest income bracket, low caste, and have low level of education. It then reflects that in this case the situation is almost identical.

#### Work Motivation

As said earlier, the people go to work with different motivations — such as financial rewards, subsistence need, expenditure of mental and physical energy, manipulation of environment, social interaction, and social status and so on (Vroom, 1965: 25-35; Miller and Form, 1964: 433-435; Clark, 1956: 301-307). We tried to know the poor's motivation in choosing the present occupation. In this connection, the poor were asked 'What prompted you to opt for the present occupation'?

The responses of the poor reveal that 83.0 per cent entered the present occupation because there was no other alternative and it was easily available. As against this,

16.3 per cent took up this occupation as the previous one was not that much paying. A small percentage of the poor (0.7 per cent) entered this occupation at the instance of the well-wishers.

Whereas 100 per cent rural poor entered the present occupation due to lack of alternative and easy availability, only nearly 73.0 per cent urban poor chose this occupation because of this reason. It means that for the majority of the poor irrespective of their contextual background, there is no choice. Over one-fourth (26.0 per cent) of the urban poor accepted the present occupation due to financial gain. However, a small percentage of the urban poor yielded to the wishes of their well-wishers (1.2 per cent).

This, then, shows that the rural poor have no choice but to go in for whatever is available. Urban poor, by contrast, have some possibility to exercise their wishes in choosing the occupations.

Table 4.13

Reasons for choosing the present occupation, in per cent

Reasons	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Previous job not paying	0.0	26.0	16.3
Wishes of well-wishers	0.0	1.2	0.7
Easily available and lack of alternatives	100.0	72.8	83.0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

#### 4 Job Satisfaction

The job satisfaction varies in terms of the overall amount of satisfaction, directly with a person's position in the occupational hierarchy (Inkeles, 1960 1-31, Chinoy, 1955, Centers, 1948 187-218, Walker and Cuest, 1962 71-88) Other factors that give job satisfaction are pay, security, and interest in work. Negatively the pacing and repetitiveness of the work limits the direct satisfactions. In addition, occupationally based strains, tensions, and feelings of alienation lead to the job dissatisfaction. The poor were asked, "Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your present occupation?" "And, if dissatisfied, what are the reasons for your dissatisfaction?"

Nearly two-third of the total sample is satisfied with their occupation. However, more rural than urban poor are satisfied with their occupations (62.0 vs 58.4 per cent). But the fact that over one-third of the poor are dissatisfied is a matter of significance in its own right. Among those who are not satisfied, 30.4 per cent find their job earning less income, 5.0 per cent say, they have to do hard work and another 5.0 per cent are dissatisfied because of its temporary nature. More rural than urban poor find their jobs earning less income (32.0 vs 29.6 per cent) and hard working (6.0 vs 4.4 per cent). As against this more urban than rural poor find their jobs temporary (7.6 vs zero per cent).

Table 4.15 compresses the data regarding the relationship between income, education, and caste, and the job satisfaction of the poor. It is evident that the rural poor from

Table 4 14

The poor's job satisfaction in per cent

Reasons for Job Dissatisfaction	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Hard working	6 0	4 4	5 0
Less income	32 0	29 6	30 4
Temporary job	0.0	7 6	4 8
Satisfied	62 0	58 4	59 8
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

Table 4 15

The poor's income, education, and caste, and their satisfaction with the main occupation, in per cent

Socio-cultural Variables	Job Satisfaction					
	Rural Poor			Urban Poor		
	Satis- fied	Dissa- tisfied	Cases	Satis- fied	Dissa- tisfied	Cases
Income bracket						
Rs.200-and-less	37 1	62 9	(70)	38 2	61 8	(34)
Rs 200-300	84 0	16.0	(75)	50 7	49 3	(140)
Rs.300-and-above	80 0	20.0	(5)	81 6	18 4	(76)
Number of cases			(150)			(250)
Education						
Low	56 5	43 5	(131)	47 6	42 4	(226)
High	100 0	0.0	(19)	30.4	69 6	(24)
Number of cases			(150)			(250)
Caste						
High	76.2	23 8	(12)	63 1	36 9	(7)
Low	53 5	46 5	(20)	57 5	42 5	(43)
Number of cases			(32)			(50)

the higher income bracket, higher level of education, and high caste are more satisfied with their jobs than the rural poor from the lower income bracket, lower education group, and lower caste. Barring education, there is homogeneity between the rural and the urban poor on this point. However, whereas more educated in rural areas are satisfied, the educated in urban areas seem to be less satisfied with their jobs.

## 5 Unemployment

Unemployment has both personal and social consequences. Hauser suggests that "unemployment is probably among the more catastrophic and critical experiences both of the person and family" (Hauser, 1964: 185). At the societal level, unemployment is most likely to be severe among the young, the aged, women, minority group, and those persons who have been laid off due to technological change. All this is indicative of their lack of integration into the occupational structure, and by implication, into the total social structure. The severe consequences of unemployment indicate that the system is not perfect in sense that both personal and social needs are not optimally met.

Table 4.16 presents the picture of unemployment in the poor's family. Nearly 47.0 per cent poor's families have unemployed members, their number ranging from one to four-and-above. While over 42.0 per cent families have two-and-less unemployed members, 4.1 per cent families have 3 to 4 unemployed members.

Table 4 16

Number of unemployed members in the poor's family, in per cent

Number of unemployed members	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Two-and-less	64 0	29 2	42 6
Three-and four	0 7	6 0	4 1
None unemployed	35 3	64 8	53 3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

A rural-urban comparison of the data reveals that 64 0 per cent rural poor's and over 29 0 per cent urban poor's families have two-and-less members unemployed. More urban than rural poor's families have three to four (6.0 vs 0.7 per cent) unemployed members

In summary, then, rural poor families are more plagued by the problem of unemployment than that of their urban counterparts, although, of course, the problem is acute among them both. Furthermore, the majority of the families of both the poor groups have two-and-less unemployed members, although some of them have even more than that. The unemployment problem among the poor strata of the society has far reaching consequences for their life and living. It is interesting to note that both rural and urban poor are of the view that now-a-days illiterates and poorly educated have no scope for employment.

We now turn our attention to find out the extent of unemployment in the poor's families with their income, education, and caste structure. Both the rural and the urban poor

earning an income of Rs 200-and-less have more unemployed members in their families. On the other hand the rural poor earning Rs 200-and-above are having more unemployed members in their families as compared to their counterparts in the same income category. Caste-wise break-up of the percentage shows that more rural poor families of the high caste have larger number of unemployed members, while more urban poor from high caste groups breed large number of unemployed.

The poor with low level of education in rural areas and high level of education in urban areas are more burdened with the problem of unemployment in their families.

We then probed the reasons of their unemployment. The one prominent reason of unemployment suggested by the poor is the lack of job opportunities (45.7 per cent) and this is true of both rural and urban families (64.7 and 33.6 per cent respectively). The next important reason is the irresponsibility of the youth and it is exclusively an urban phenomenon.

To sum up the poor feel the pinch of non-availability of jobs in the society. In some cases, they realize that the youth in their families are going wayward — one of the consequences of the life without job. A recent study of urban development and employment in Calcutta found that unemployment was particularly high among the urban born educated youth, but very low among the poorer sections of the society (Lubell, 1974).

Table 4 17

Independent variables and the unemployment in the poor's families, in per cent

Social-cultural Variables	Unemployment							Cases
	Rural Poor			Cases	Urban Poor			Cases
	2-and-less	3-4	None unemployed		2-and-less	3-4	None unemployed	
Income bracket								
Rs 200-and-less	64 3	0 0	35 7	(70)	61 8	5 9	32 3	(34)
Rs 200-300	64 0	1 3	34 7	(75)	37 1	8 6	54 3	(140)
Rs 300-and-above	80 0	0.0	20 0	(5)	0 0	1 3	98 7	(76)
Number of cases				(150)				(250)
Education								
Low	74 0	0 8	25 2	(131)	22 1	6 2	71 7	(226)
High	0.0	0 0	100 0	(19)	95 7	4 3	0 0	(24)
Number of cases				(150)				(250)
Caste								
High	82 5	0 0	17.5	(12)	29 0	2 6	68 4	(7)
Low	50 0	1 1	48 9	(20)	22 0	6 8	71 2	(43)
Number of cases				(32)			0 0	(50)

#### Employment of Female Members in the Poor's Family

Women are increasingly participating in the occupational world, They have moved into the work force owing to the availability of job, freedom from many of their traditional chores in home, and rise in living cost of living. Now the age at marriage has also gone high and the life span extended. In addition, there are improved educational opportunities for women which have improved their education and raised their occupational aspirations. However, this is part of the

reality of the Indian social situation. These avenues are open only to the few. Furthermore, women's work scope is limited, certain specific occupations stand out as women's occupations. Most of the studies report that although the proportion of women, who are employed in the slums, is significantly higher than for the urban population as a whole, they suffer higher rates of unemployment, receive lower pay (even for equal work), and have far fewer choices of occupation than men (Majumdar, 1977: 216-240). We wanted to ascertain the veracity of this fact from our own study.

Our analysis shows that only 7.0 per cent females in the poor's family are gainfully occupied. Conversely, the majority of them (93.0 per cent) are unemployed, their job is confined to the domestic work. The female belonging to the urban poor's families are, however, employed in relatively larger number than that of the rural poor's families (10.8 vs. 0.7 per cent).

It shows that there is lack of employment opportunity for the women even when the poor families have little inhibition in seeing their women work.

To make our analysis complete, it would in order to present two case studies each from rural and urban areas.

#### Case Study 1 Rural

Ramaiya\* from village Lodhar (36 years), belongs to the Scheduled Caste. He is an agricultural wage earner since he started working. His father, too, was doing the same job. He supports a family of six members. His monthly earning

\*The names are pseudonym.

ranges in between Rs 100 to 150 His total income is not sufficient enough to meet both ends His elder son, who is hardly of 14 years age, had to go in for the same work But his earning is relatively too small to do much good to the family He has no regular employment His son is working much against the wishes of the father, but there are compulsions hard to shake off His anxiety came to surface when he said that his offsprings are also likely to lead the life not much different from his

Case Study 2 Urban Shyamlal, 41 years old, lives in Loharan Ka Bhatta slum of Kanpur He comes to the city from a Harijan family of a village of eastern part of Uttar Pradesh Formerly, he was an agricultural wage labour and received a paltry sum even after putting hard labour He had to migrate mainly to get a better job But, soon after coming to the city, he plunged into difficulties He could not manage any job for a long time and had to depend on a neighbour of his village After hectic search, he could get a labour's job. The co-villager was much more helpful Now he earns Rs 150-200 a month which is not very good but better than what he earned in the village Every month he remits some amount of his hard-earn money by money-order to his family members, who are staying at village Although he is not satisfied with his urban job too, but there is no way out

What has just been said about the occupations of the poor is meant simply as a brief characterization to set it off from other sections of society. The present chapter has

attempted to show that the poor are employed in the low-status, less-paying jobs such as petty cultivator and agricultural wage earner, non-agricultural wage earner, self-employed petty businessmen, salary earners, and 'not gainfully employed'. There is lesser diversification of employment opportunities in rural than urban areas. The nature of jobs the poor are engaged in reflect that both the rural and urban poor work for others and are susceptible to easy exploitation. The jobs are mostly temporary, seasonal, and on daily wage. Both rural and urban poor are mostly not employed in permanent jobs. The majority of the urban poor and a significant proportion from the rural poor do not have any subsidiary occupation to supplement their income.

It should be apparent that there is occupational mobility to certain extent, but, by and large, there is close similarity between the nature of occupations of fathers and sons. There is, of course, spatial mobility, but in that case the available jobs are one that only poor can do: low and despised. Even the entry of the poor to such occupations is not smooth, some of them had to bribe even for that.

The main motivation for the poor to work is the financial consideration, for, the jobs poor handle require hard labour, earn less income, and are temporary in tenure. The poor's families in both rural and urban areas have a large proportion of men and women unemployed. The main reason for their unemployment is the lack of the job opportunities.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

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### INCOME AND ASSETS

The preceding chapter has attempted to show the economic component of the poverty in terms of occupations. It was found that the poor, whether rural or urban, earn their livelihood mainly as a labour, which is at the lowest rank of the occupational ladder. Even this job is not easily available, able-bodied members in the poor's family had to remain unemployed. In this chapter, our focus will be on other aspects of economic component of poverty, viz., income and assets, and liabilities.

The economic condition refers primarily to the material possessions, opportunities for income, and command over resources. "An adequate definition of the economic condition of a family", say Gross and Miller, "should include (i) current income, including covert as well as manifest forms of income; (ii) assets, and (iii) access to public and private services, the quantity and quality of schools, medical services, recreational areas, and the like that are available" (Gross and Miller, 1967 435).

Income component of poverty is important from several angles. First, income gives a family the power to control utilities which, in turn, is a hallmark of social prestige and status. It is, therefore, rightly included among the indicators of socio-economic status. Secondly, income permits access to public and private services — educational, medical,

and recreational Thirdly, the style-of-life of an individual is determined, to a large extent, by the income he earns, which, in turn, conditions the group one interacts with Furthermore, income determines one's social values Marshall remarks "As man's riches increase, his food and drink become more various and costly, but his appetite is limited by nature, and when his expenditure on food is extravagant, it is more often to gratify the desire of hospitality and display than to indulge his own senses" (Marshall, 1961 409, Parsons, 1940 481) Besides, or so to speak, above them all, income acts as work motivator and its value surpasses the fulfilment of bare basic survival of an individual and his family "One indisputable source of the desire of people to work", says Vroom, "is the money they are paid for working. The goods and services that are purchased with money go far beyond insuring survival. They serve among other things, as an indicator of social status of the purchaser" (Vroom, 1964 30; See also Veblen, 1974 60-80) Since, income is very important for the poor in its own right, we analysed the income, assets and liabilities, which jointly will speak about the economic condition of the poor.

#### Composition and Distribution of Income and Assets

Income has a rupee and paisa sign on it Variation in one's income over time seems a simple matter to compute. But the income calculation is complicated in view of changes that have occurred in economy. Price level changes affect the purchasing power of each rupee of income. The command over resources — which is the significance of income — is subject

to variety of influences. So there is the problem of assessment of the general command over resources. Of course, monetary income provides an increasingly inadequate indication of the position of an individual or family. Even then several scholars have used monetary income as an indicator of poverty (see, for example, Titmuss, 1958, 1962, Galbraith, 1958). We have taken it as an indicator because in the case of the poor, the level of command over resources is always very low. Here the income of the poor includes income from all sources, including main occupation, and subsidiary occupations. While questions on income were posed to the poor, they usually showed a tendency to understate the income.

The data regarding the income of the household, as presented in Table 5.1, shows that the majority of the poor (53.7 per cent) fall in the income bracket of Rs. 200-300, and slightly over one-fourth in the income bracket of Rs. 100-200. There are 4.3 per cent poor who earn Rs. 100-and-less per mensem. If the three groups are combined together, it is found that nearly 79.7 per cent of the poor earn less than Rs. 300 per month. As against this, 18.0 per cent fall in the income bracket of Rs. 300-400. Those earning over Rs. 400 and Rs. 500 are 2.0 and 0.3 per cent, respectively.

When the income of the rural and urban poor is compared it is found that the rural poor earn less than the urban poor. 96.6 per cent rural as against 69.6 per cent urban poor fall in the income bracket of Rs. 300-and-less. As against this, 30.4 per cent urban poor have a monthly income of

Table 5 1  
Monthly income of the poor, in per cent

Income-bracket	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Rs 100-and-less	10 0	0 8	4 3
Rs 100-200	36.6	12 8	21 7
Rs 200-300	50.0	56 0	53 7
Rs 300-400	2 7	27 2	18 0
Rs 400-500	0 7	2 8	2 0
Rs 500-and-above	0.0	0 4	0 3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)
Monthly average income per household	Rs 197 3	Rs 269 6	Rs 242 5
Per capita income	Rs 315 60	Rs.660 24	Rs 493 20

Significant at 01 level

Rs 300-and-above, whereas only 3 4 per cent rural poor fall in this income bracket

This, then, shows that the condition of the urban poor is relatively better than that of the rural poor from the standpoint of income. A large number of poor have an income of Rs 300-and-less, while a small proportion get an income of Rs 300-and-more.

When the relationship between income of the poor and their contextual background, is analysed, it is found that the distinction between the income of the rural and urban poor is marked and significant (.01). Average monthly income of the rural household is Rs. 197.3 and of urban household Rs 269 6

The discrete income categories have been merged into three broad categories (1) Rs 200-and-less labelled 'lowest', (2) Rs 200-300 labelled 'lower', and (3) Rs. 300-500-and-above labelled 'low' Table 5 2 compresses the relevant data The result of Table 5 1 is once again supported by the data in Table 5 2 It is evident that the proportion of the lower and low income group is higher among the urban poor (56 0 vs 50 0 per cent, and 30.4 vs 3 4 per cent) than of the lowest income group among the urban poor (46 6 vs 13 6 per cent) If the lower and the lowest income brackets are combined together, the rural poor's percentage comes to 96 6 and urban poor's 86 4 This, then, clearly shows that the urban poor are relatively better off in terms of income The distinction between the income of the two groups rural and urban is significant at .01 level of probability

Table 5 2  
Level of income, in per cent

Level of Income	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Low	3 4	30 4	20 3
Lower	50 0	56 0	53 7
Lowest	*46 6	*13 6	26 0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

\* Significant at 01 level

It we look at the income of the poor and the occupations they are engaged in (see Chapter 4), it is natural to expect that their occupation should earn the lowest income. And, the hypothesis is found correct from our analysis the poor occupations generate lowest income.

Let us now look at the relationship between the income of the poor and their education, and caste. It is observed that irrespective of the educational and contextual background, the majority of the poor earn Rs 200-300, and Rs 200-and-less. More urban low educated poor fall in the income bracket of Rs 200-and-less. The income and education of the poor is not associated, for, the relationship between the two is not found significant at 05 level of probability.

Caste-wise distribution of income reveals that in both the rural and urban areas majority of the poor from high caste fall in the income bracket of Rs 200-300. But rural poor from low caste are in majority who are in the income bracket of Rs 200-and-less. Majority of the urban poor from all the caste group fall in the income bracket of Rs 200-300. It shows that the income of the poor and caste are not related with each other. The relationship is not significant at 05 level of probability.

This, then, suggests that whether the poor are educated or not, and belong to the lower caste or higher caste, they earn low income.

Table 5 3

Socio-cultural variables, and income of the poor, in per cent

Socio-cultural Variables	*Income of the Poor							
	Rural Poor				Urban Poor			
			Cases				Cases	
	Rs 200-and-less	Rs 200-300	Rs 300-500-and-above		Rs 200-and-less	Rs 200-300	Rs 300-500-and-above	
Education*								
Low	47 3	48 8	3 9	(131)	14 6	56 6	28 8	(226)
High	47 4	52 6	0 0	(19)	4 2	50 0	45.8	(24)
Number of cases				(150)				(250)
Caste*								
High	36 5	57 1	6 4	(63)	7 9	55 3	36 8	(38)
Low	52 4	46 4	1 2	(84)	15 2	55 5	29 3	(191)
Non-caste	100 0	0 0	0 0	(3)	9 5	61 9	28 6	(21)
Number of cases				(150)				(250)

\* Not significant at 05 level

The average income per household<sup>1</sup> per month from different sources has also been worked out separately. Another look at Table 5 1 reveals that average income per household per mensem is Rs 242 5 for the sample as a whole, and Rs, 197 3 per month and Rs 269 6 per month per household for rural and urban areas, separately. The average income

<sup>1</sup>The average income per household, from any particular source is obtained by dividing the estimated total of that source by the corresponding number of family members in households reporting income from that source

per month per household clearly shows that it is higher in urban than in rural areas

The per capita yearly income<sup>2</sup> calculation reveals that it is Rs. 315 60 for the rural areas, Ps 660-24 for urban areas, and Rs 493 20 for sample as a whole. Here again, the rural poor lag behind the urban poor. And, if the per capita income is any indication, it may be concluded that the income of the poor is at its lowest ebb and the condition of the rural poor is worst than that of the urban poor.

#### Sources of the Household Income

Why the poor's income is low can be understood clearly if one looks at the source of their income. The data in Table 5.4 relating to the sources of household shows that as many as 31.4 per cent households earn income from petty cultivation and agriculture wage labour, and 48.5 per cent households receive income from non-agricultural labour wage. If the two sources are combined together, nearly 80.0 per cent poor earn their income from labour. The rest of others derive their income from salaries, and petty business (0.3 and 7.8 per cent, respectively). No wonder that 12.0 per cent of them are not gainfully employed.

In rural areas, the three sources of income in order of precedence are petty cultivation and agricultural wages (84.0

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<sup>2</sup>The per capita yearly income has been obtained by multiplying the monthly income of the household with 12, and then dividing it by the total number of family members.

$$\text{Per-capita income} = \frac{\text{Total income}}{\text{Number of family members}} \times 12$$

Table 5 4

Sources of income for the poor, in per cent

Sources of Income	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 Petty cultivation and agricultural wage labour	84 0	0 0	31 4
2 Non-agricultural wage labour	15 3	68 4	48 5
3 Service	0.0	0 4	0 3
4 Petty businessmen	0 7	12 0	7 8
5 Not gainfully occupied	0.0	19 2	12 0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

per cent), non-agriculture wages (15 3 per cent), and petty business (0 7 per cent) In urban areas, by contrast, the three sources of income in order of importance are non-agricultural wages (68 4 per cent), petty business (12 0 per cent), and service (0.4 per cent) It is in urban areas that nearly one-fifth of the poor are not gainfully occupied, resulting in lowering their income further

#### Reasons for Meagre Income

In this connection, we tried to find out the reasons the poor assign for their meagre income. As Table 5 5 reveals, the limited source of earning is the major cause of their poor income (48 5 per cent) followed by the insufficient earning (33 0 per cent) Nearly one out of every ten poor think that the larger number of dependents in the family is the cause of their low income (9.5 per cent) Over one out of every

Table 5 5

Reasons the poor advance for their meagre earning, in per cent

Reasons for Poor Earning	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 Limited source of income	80 7	29 2	48 3
2 Insufficient earning	6 0	49 2	33 0
3 Large number of dependents	1 3	14 4	9 5
4 Low wages	11 3	2 4	5 8
5 Unemployment	0.7	2 4	1 7
6 Cannot say	0.0	2 4	1 5
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

twenty poor feel that it is due to low wages that their income is poor. Nearly 2 0 per cent poor perceive unemployment as a cause of their poor income.

The rural-urban-wise split of the percentage reveals an interesting contrast. For the rural poor, the main causes of their low income in descending order are limited source of income (80 7 per cent), low wages (11 3 per cent), insufficient earning (6 0 per cent), large number of dependents (1.3 per cent), and unemployment (0 7 per cent). The main causes of urban poor's low income in the same descending order are insufficient earning (49 2 per cent), limited source of income (29 2 per cent), large number of dependents (14 4 per cent), unemployment (2 4 per cent), and low wages (2.4 per cent).

Despite the differences in emphasis, the main cause of the low income for both the poor groups are limited sources, insufficient earning, and large number of dependents.

## Earners in the Households

The income of the head of the household is supplemented if there are, besides him, other earning members in the family. In the case of the poor families, it is desideratum that all able-bodied, if of working age, must work to keep themselves going on. As Table 5.6 shows, only 23.2 per cent poor families have earners besides the chief earner, a great majority of them (76.8 per cent) have none except the head of the household.

When we look at the same data from the viewpoint of relations of earners with the chief earner, it is found that most of them are sons of the head of the household (9.5 per cent) followed by siblings (6.7 per cent), and parents (5.7 per cent). In some cases, say, 1.3 per cent, relatives share their earning with the poor's families.

Interestingly, the percentage of families with no earners is higher among the rural than among the urban families (80.4 vs. 70.7 per cent). More sons and parents are earners in rural families (14.7 vs. 6.4 per cent and 11.3 vs. 2.4 per cent, respectively) and more siblings and relatives are earners in the urban families (8.8 vs. 3.3 per cent and 2.0 vs. zero per cent respectively).

This, then, shows that the rural poor families are having more earners than that of their urban counterparts. Perhaps, parents, sons, and relatives of rural poor are engaged in agriculture and kindred occupations. In urban areas, by contrast, siblings, sons, parents, and relatives

Table 5 6  
 Earners in the poor's family, in per cent

	Rural Poor (N = 150)	Urban Poor (N = 250)	Rural + Urban Poor (N = 400)
1 Earners' relation with chief earner			
Sons	14 7	6 4	9 5
Siblings	3 3	8 8	6 7
Parents	11 3	2 4	5 7
Relatives	0 0	2 0	1 3
None	70 7	80 4	76 8
2 Number of earners			
One earner	26 0	10 8	16 5
Two earner	3 3	8 8	6 7
No earner	70 7	80 4	76 8
3 Age of earner			
19 years-and-less	19 4	3 6	9 2
19 years-and-above	10 9	16 0	14 0
No earner	70 7	80 4	76 8

all appear to be helping hand perhaps because earners are dispersed in diverse activities

As regards the age of the earners, the majority of them (14 0 per cent) fall in the age-bracket of 19 years-and-above, and 9 2 per cent of 19 years-and-less. Although most of the earners are adults, nevertheless a significant proportion (9 2 per cent) of them are young. This smacks of the prevalence of child-labour among the poor.

The rural-urban-wise break-up of percentages reveals that more rural than urban youngsters go in for earning in villages (19 4 vs 3 6 per cent). Its one obvious reason

is that the young in the families of the poor in villages do some sorts of agricultural work. Urban migrant generally leave their children in their native place.

#### Hanger-Ons in Poors' Family

A glimpse of the quantum of burden the poor carry in terms of dependents may be had from Table 5.7. It is evident that nearly three-fifth of the poor (59.5 per cent) have 5 to 8, and nearly one-fifth (18.5 per cent) 8-and-above dependent members in their family. In other words, nearly 78.0 per cent poor support 5 to 12 members. As against this, there are only 22.0 per cent poor who have 1-5 dependents to maintain. Differently expressed, the poor have relatively more dependents in their family to support.

The rural poor have a larger proportion of dependents to sustain than that of the urban poor. For example, more rural than urban poor had 5 to 12 dependents to support (83.2 vs. 74.8 per cent). Conversely, more urban than rural poor had to keep up 1 to 5 hangers-ons (25.2 vs. 16.7 per cent).

The foregoing analysis leads to two conclusions. One, the poor, irrespective of their contextual background, have large number of dependents to support, which makes their economic condition further worse. Secondly, for the poor the increased number may serve as an asset in the long run when the dependents will also join the work force, for they will contribute to the family earning. Finally, the rural poor have more dependents perhaps because of the prevalence of the joint family.

Table 5 7

Hanger-ons in the poors' family, in per cent

Number of Dependents	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
5-and-less	16 8	25 2	22 0
5-8	70 6	52 8	59 5
8-10	12.0	20 4	17 3
10-12	0 6	1 2	1 0
12-and-above	0 0	0 4	0 2
Number or cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

## Composition and Distribution of Wealth

The wealth that a household possesses might be (a) tangible and reproducible wealth consisting of physical assets like houses and buildings, various kinds of farm assets, and business plant and machinery, (b) tangible but not reproducible wealth consists of land which a household might own, (c) intangible and reproducible wealth comprises of financial assets which include bank deposits, securities, life insurance, and provident fund, etc (NCAER, 1965 Chapter 2) Following this pattern, an attempt has been made to present the component of wealth of the poor in the pages that follow

1 Tangible Reproducible Wealth The people are most reluctant to disclose the value of various forms of intangible wealth owned by them. When questioned about the total value of tangible wealth like land owned, the poor were unable to provide reliable data, some tended to overstate

the value, others to understate the value, and the majority did not know what prices apply to different kinds of land. So was the situation in case of live-stock. It was, therefore, decided to collect information regarding the quantum of intangible wealth possessed without converting them in value. The tangible reproducible wealth of the rural and urban poor households consist of (1) houses and buildings owned, (2) farm assets, (3) material possessions, and (4) livestock.

**House Owned** Of the total sample, 63.5 per cent poor have their own house, the remaining 26.5 per cent do not. More rural than urban poor possess their own houses (96.7 vs 43.6 per cent). This, then, suggests that the problem of shelter is more acute for urban than rural poor (for more incisive analysis, see Chapter Seven).

**Land Ownership** As Table 5.8 shows, the majority of the poor do not own land (63.3 per cent). Of 33.7 per cent poor who own land, 17.7 per cent have less than a bigha,<sup>3</sup> another 16.0 per cent from 1-3 bighas of land.

What is true of sample population is also true of rural and urban samples separately. In both the areas, poor do not own land in majority of the cases (53.4 vs 74.0 per cent). Those who own land upto a bigha are more in rural areas (29.4 vs 10.8 per cent). The poor possessing land between 1-3 bighas are more or less equal in both the areas (17.2 per cent rural and 15.2 per cent urban).

It, then, transpires that the majority of the rural poor, who are, directly or indirectly, linked with agricultural

<sup>3</sup> 1 bigha is equal to 1600 sq. yards

Table 5 8  
Pattern of land ownership, in per cent

Quantity of Land	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 bigha-and-less	29 4	10 8	17 7
1-2 bighas	10 6	9 2	9 7
2-3 bighas	6 6	6 0	6 3
No land	53 4	71 0	66 3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

activities, are landless and those who possess some land are either small or marginal peasants. In urban areas, too, a small percentage of the poor own land at their native place, but it is very limited. Perhaps this is one potent reason for their migration from rural to urban areas.

Here are two commentaries on the ownership of land by the informants. The rural poor commented:

"Thodi si jamin bap ke pas thi, karz pura karane ke liye bechna pada."

(A little land was left by the father which had to be sold out to repay the debts.)

The urban poor said:

"Agar jamin hoti to shahar mein kya karane aate."

(Had I owned land, what was need of coming to the city.)

#### Material Possession

To get a picture of wealth of the poor, we collected information about the kind of materials they possess in their

houses The material possession was divided into two broad categories inside and outside household possessions The 'inside material possessions' included utensils, and the 'outside material possessions' covered furniture, means of entertainment and transportation

Of the total sample population, 52.8 per cent use utensils made of costly metals such as brass, dhool, stainless steel, etc., and 43.7 per cent made of low cost metals, such as aluminium, iron, etc. As against this, a small proportion, say, 3.5 per cent, use earthen pots (see Table 5.9)

Table 5.9

Utensils in the poor's house, in per cent

Kind of Utensils	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 Earthen	6.0	2.0	3.5
2 High cost metallic	68.0	43.6	52.8
3 Low cost metallic	26.0	54.4	43.7
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

The rural poor outnumber the urban poor in the use of utensils made of costly metals (68.0 vs. 43.6 per cent), and the urban poor outpace the rural poor in the use of low cost metallic utensils (54.4 vs. 26.0 per cent). The earthen pots are relatively more popular in rural than in urban households (6.0 vs. 2.0 per cent).

We then tried to know whether utensils the poor possess are taken in daily use or are preserved. It has been found that as much as 93.5 per cent poor use their utensils, while 6.5 per cent preserve some of them. It is interesting to note that the tendency of possessing more utensils than in actual use is a predominantly rural tendency (13.3 vs 2.4 per cent).

The picture of the wealth is better reflected if we look at the material possessions for 'outward' use. It appears from Table 5.10 that nearly 30.0 per cent poor do not have even cots to sleep, 86.8 per cent have no vehicle to ride, 95.5 per cent possess no means of entertainment, and 98.8 per cent have no chairs. When the rural and urban poor are compared, it is found that more rural poor had cots and/or planks (76.6 vs. 52.0 per cent), and more urban poor own cycle (20.8 vs 0.7 per cent), and transistors (7.2 vs 0.7 per cent).

Table 5.10

Household items in the poor's houses, in per cent

Household items	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Plank/cots	82.6	63.6	70.8
Cycle	0.7	20.8	13.2
Transistors	0.7	7.2	4.5
Chairs	0.0	2.0	1.3
None	16.0	6.4	10.2
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

This, then, shows that the urban poor are relatively more exposed to mass media and possess some means of conveyance and entertainment. The urban poor possess less lots/plots perhaps because there is shortage of space in cities as many of them live in one room tenement or many of them happen to be pavement dwellers.

#### Livestock

Domestic animals, especially cattle, sheep, and pigs, are tangible reproducible wealth. They are not only source of income but also valuable property. Domestication of animals is, therefore, a usual practice of the poor. The information regarding animals domesticated by the poor is presented in Table 5.11. The majority of the poor do not domesticate animals (60.3 per cent). Among those who tame animals, 17.5 per cent keep cow, 7.5 per cent goat, and 5.3 per cent buffalo. All the three — cow, buffalo, and goat, are milking animals. Besides them, pig is another popular domesticated animal for 5.0 per cent poor. Hens are also tamed by the poor (4.4 per cent).

As is expected, the domestication of animals is more popular among the rural than among the urban poor (74.7 vs 18.8 per cent). The rural poor outnumber the urban poor on almost every type of domesticated animals: cows (42.7 vs. 2.4 per cent), buffalo (10.7 vs 2.0 per cent), pig (8.0 vs 3.2 per cent), and hens (6.0 vs 3.2 per cent). The goats are, however, almost equally popular among them both.

Table 5 11  
Domestication of animals, in per cent

Domesticated Animals	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Cows	42 7	2 4	17 5
Goats	7 3	8 0	7 5
Burfaloes	10 7	2 0	5.3
Pigs	8 0	3 2	5 0
Hens	6 0	81 2	60 3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

### Intangible and Reproducible Wealth

The intangible wealth consists of bank-deposits, securities, life insurance, provident fund, etc. All of them depend on the past contributions. These are part of the income maintenance programmes which promote social security. Their main objective is to achieve the acceptable and stable standard of living. These programmes are meant to reduce poverty and facilitate access to essential goods and services. The income, thus, saved is used by individuals and families experiencing disruptions in their normal income flows or when they are unable to attain adequate income levels (Ian Brownlie, 1972: 155). We wanted to know whether the poor derive the benefit of the income maintenance schemes that depend on the past contributions.

Table 5 12 shows that only 35.4 per cent poor are able to save their money, a large majority of them do not. Maximum saving is to the tune of Rs. 20-and-less per mensem (28.5

Table 5 12  
Monthly saving by the poor, in per cent

Monthly Savings	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Ps 20-and-less	16 0	36 0	28 5
Ps 21-40	0.0	8 4	5 3
Rs 41-60	0.0	1 6	1 0
Rs 61-80	0 0	0 4	0 3
Rs 81-and-above	0.0	0 4	0 3
No saving	84 0	52 8	64 6
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

per cent) A small percentage of them save Rs 21-and-above (6 9 per cent) and 1 6 per cent Rs 41-and-above

The urban poor save more than the rural poor (47 2 vs 16 0 per cent) whereas 36 4 per cent urban poor save Rs 20-and-less a month, only 16 0 per cent rural poor do so The urban poor save Rs 21-40 per month (8 4 per cent) and Rs 41-and-above (2 4 per cent), whereas the rural poor have no saving at these levels The rural poor save less perhaps because their income is low or perhaps they are less acquainted with money saving schemes

The preceding analysis highlights that the poor, by and large, are not in a position to save money as they are hand to mouth The urban poor, however, save somewhat more than the rural poor

The feeling of the poor regarding saving is well-reflected by what one rural informant said

"Do agha ki roti nahi milati bachat kahan se hogi"

(It is difficult to get two meals a day, how could it be possible to save

Similar was the reaction of the urban poor

Let us now look at the relationship between socio-cultural characteristics of the poor and their pattern of saving

As Table 5.13 shows, only a small proportion of rural poor working as petty cultivator and agricultural wage earner (19.1 per cent) are able to save, while a large proportion of the wage earner urban poor (56.1 per cent) and cent-per-cent salary earner are able to do so. Also, the self-employed petty businessmen in rural areas are not able to save at all, while 30.0 per cent urban poor save some money. There is a marked and significant difference in the saving pattern of the rural and urban poor, if seen occupation wise (01)

An analysis of the relationship between education and saving pattern shows that in urban areas, saving is relatively higher among the poor with low and high education as compared to the rural poor (45.6 vs. 18.3 per cent low-educated, and 62.5 vs. zero per cent high-educated poor). This, then, shows that the educational level and saving pattern of the poor are not associated.

More urban poor (57.9 vs. 45.0 per cent) belonging to the high caste are able to save money whereas more rural poor of the low than high caste are able to save money (19.0 vs. 12.7 per cent).

Table 5 13

Socio-cultural variables and saving of the poor, in per cent

Socio-cultural Variables	Saving or the Poor				
	Rural Poor		Urban Poor		
	Saving	No Saving	Cases	Saving	No Saving
Occupation					
Petty cultivator and agri-culture wage earner	19 1*	80 9	(125)	0 0	0 0
Non-agriculture wage earner	0 0	100 0	(23)	56 1	43 9
Self-employed/petty businessmen	0 0	100 0	(1)	30 0	70 0
Salary earner	0 0	0.0	(0)	100 0*	0 0
Not gainfully occupied	0 0	0.0	(0)	25 0	75 0
Number of cases			(150)		
Education					
Low	18 3**	81 7	(131)	45.6	54 4
High	0.0	100 0	(19)	62 5**	37 5
Number of cases			(150)		
Caste					
High	12 7	87 3	(12)	57 9*	42 1
Low	19 0*	81 0	(20)	45 0	55 0
Number of cases			(32)	47 6	52 4
					(50)

\*Significant at .01 level

\*\*Non-significant at .01 level.

The relationship between caste and saving pattern is found positive (.01)

We further elicited the information about the agency they choose for saving the money. Table 5.14 shows that the main source of saving is the provident fund (16.0 per cent), followed by life insurance (6.3 per cent), bank (10.3 per cent), and post-office (1.0 per cent). A small percentage of the poor keep their saving with the reliable neighbour (0.5 per cent) or hide it within their house itself (1.3 per cent).

Table 5.14

Agencies where savings are made, in per cent

Agencies of Saving	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Provident fund	0.0	25.6	16.0
Bank	16.0	7.2	10.3
Insurance policy	0.0	10.0	6.3
Kept in house	0.0	2.0	1.3
Post-office	0.0	1.6	1.0
Reliable neighbour	0.0	0.8	0.5
No saving	84.0	52.8	64.6
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

For the rural poor, the only popular agency of saving is bank (16.0 per cent). By contrast, urban poor's savings are in the provident fund (25.6 per cent), life-insurance corporation (10.0 per cent), and bank (7.2 per cent). A small percentage of urban poor (2.0 per cent) keep their

We asked the poor whether they have derived benefit from various welfare schemes of private and public agencies. Table 5.15 reveals that the majority of the poor (95.5 per cent) did not receive any benefit from any welfare scheme whatsoever. Only 2.5 per cent poor received some benefit from public and 2.0 per cent from private schemes.

More rural than urban poor got help from public welfare schemes (3.4 vs. 2.0 per cent) and more urban than rural poor received help from private welfare schemes (2.4 vs. 1.3 per cent). However, there is no marked distinction between the pattern of benefit available to the poor from these two schemes.

It transpires, then, that most of the poor are not getting any benefit from the welfare schemes either in the urban or in the rural areas.

#### Borrowing and Spending Pattern

The borrowing and lending are the most puzzling areas of investigation. Experience reveals that questions relating to the level of indebtedness are resented by some poor. Secondly, such questions when put to the poor, elicited a tendency to exaggerate indebtedness. While income was understated, the expenditure was exaggerated. This tendency was noticeable in our sample particularly among those who earned very little or had very unsteady and uncertain income. Keeping this in view, let us look at the borrowing and spending patterns of the poor.

amount with them, but a small proportion, say 0.3 per cent, keep it with the reliable neighbour

This, then, shows that the urban poor have adopted popular income maintenance media more than the rural poor

The private and public welfare programmes for the poor are there in the country. On the one hand, the group of poor is said to be suffering from bad luck. So the poor provide the rest of the population with different emotional satisfactions, they evoke compassion, pity, and charity (Gans, 1972: 280). In this process those who feel to be fortunate start several programmes for the deprived and poor. On the other hand, government is spending more and more for the welfare of the poor. These programmes are meant to reduce poverty and facilitate access to essential goods and services. The welfare programmes are not unified, rather there are separate programmes for the poor, unemployed, children, women, aged, and so on.

Table 5.15

Aid from public and private welfare schemes, in per cent

Source of Aid	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Private schemes	1.3	2.4	2.0
Public schemes	3.4	2.0	2.5
No help	95.3	95.6	95.5
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

Private welfare schemes include help from particular person, help from trust, etc.

Public welfare schemes include government subsidy, help from various institutions and agencies like municipal corporation, banks, etc.

As asked the poor whether they have derived benefit from various welfare schemes of private and public agencies Table 5.15 reveals that the majority of the poor (95.5 per cent) did not receive any benefit from any welfare scheme. Whatsoever. Only 2.5 per cent poor received some benefit from public and 2.0 per cent from private schemes.

More rural than urban poor got help from public welfare schemes (3.4 vs. 2.0 per cent) and more urban than rural poor received help from private welfare schemes (2.4 vs. 1.3 per cent). However, there is no marked distinction between the pattern of benefit available to the poor from these two schemes.

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#### Borrowing and Spending Pattern

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## Indebtedness

It has been found that most of the urban slum dwellers and rural poor incur debts. They remain indebted not only because they happen to be poor but also due to the propensity to spend more than what they can afford on the social and personal gratifications, including addiction and gambling (Desai and Pillai, 1972: 140). It has also been noted that in many cases the poor become indebted in legacy of their ancestors (Report of the Deccan Riots Commission, 1975: 89). The difficulties of uneconomic farmer-cum-agricultural labourers are aggravated because of replacement of payment in kind by payment in cash and its coincidence with regular payment of assessment (Thoburn, 1969: 45). Furthermore, when the income is not sufficient to meet their subsistence, a certain amount of indebtedness is bound to exist.

The data available to us, suggests that as many as 58.7 per cent poor are indebted, whereas 41.3 per cent had no debt. Interestingly, more rural than urban poor are indebted (71.3 vs. 51.2 per cent).

Let us now see the relationship between the occupation, education, caste, and the indebtedness of the poor.

It is observed that cent-per-cent rural poor from the occupational groups of non-agriculture wage earning, and self-employed/petty businessmen are indebted, while the proportion of the urban poor who are indebted is less than the rural poor in these two occupational groups. Among the urban poor indebtedness is more pronounced among them who are engaged in salary earning and not gainfully occupied.

Table 5 1b  
Socio-cultural variables and indebtedness or the poor, in per cent

Socio-cultural Variables	Indebtedness or the Poor				
	Rural Poor		Urban Poor		Cases
	Indebted	Not Indebted	Indebted	Not Indebted	
Occupation					
Petty cultivator and agriculture wage earner	65.8*	34.2	0.0	0.0	(0)
Non-agriculture wage earner	100.0	0.0	53.2*	46.8	(171)
Self-employed/petty businessmen	100.0	0.0	30.0	70.0	(30)
Salary earner	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	(1)
Not gainfully occupied	0.0	0.0	54.2	45.8	(48)
Number of cases					(250)
Education					
Low	67.2*	32.8	51.8*	48.2	(226)
High	100.0	0.0	41.7	58.3	(24)
Number of cases					(250)
Caste					
High	55.6	44.4	47.4	52.6	(7)
Low	82.1*	18.9	46.8*	53.2	(42)
Number of cases					(50)

\*Significant at 01 level

Education-wise break-up reveals that more rural than urban poor are indebted irrespective of their level of education. The rural poor with low level of education outnumber the urban poor (67.2 vs. 51.8 per cent), and rural poor with high level of education again outweigh the urban poor with the same education level (cent-per-cent vs. 41.7 per cent).

More rural than urban poor from all castes are indebted, high caste 55.6 vs. 47.4 per cent, low caste 82.1 vs. 46.8 per cent).

Here a marked and significant distinction is found between the rural and urban poor.

The phenomenon of debt is so acute among the poor that one of the rural poor said

"Apna karz to bharana hi padata hai, bap-dada ka karz bhi ohaina padata hai"

(One has to repay the debt of oneself as well as of his father and forefather).

Likewise an urban informant revealed that

"Sabhi chahte hain ki karz na lena pade lekin bina karz aadmi bhukhon mar jayega"

(Everyone prefers not to go in for loan, but without loan one has to die of hunger)

The analysis of the purpose for which the poor resort to borrowings indicates that there are various reasons for raising loans (see Table 5.17). The majority, in fact, 41.3 per cent, have incurred no debt. However, a significant percentage of the poor (37.3 per cent) did raise loan due to their domestic needs — the needs which they were not able to meet due to their meagre income. The second most important reason for borrowing is the marriage of daughters and sons.

Table 5 17  
Reasons for borrowing, in per cent

Purpose of Borrowing	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Domestic needs	59.3	24.0	37.3
Marriage	0.7	12.8	8.3
Economic activities	10.6	4.8	7.0
Medical expenses	0.0	5.6	3.5
House construction and/or repairing	0.0	2.8	1.6
Litigation	0.7	1.2	1.0
Do not take loan except in emergencies	28.7	48.8	41.3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

(8.3 per cent) Another a third reason for raising loan is to promote economic activities. Illness accounts for 3.5 per cent and house construction for 1.6 per cent loan. Some, say 1.0 per cent, incur debt for litigation.

When we look at the pattern of borrowing rural-urban-wise, an interesting contrast appears. It is found that more rural than urban poor are in debt for several reasons (71.3 vs. 51.2 per cent of the total). More rural than urban poor (59.3 vs. 24.0 per cent) borrow to buy necessities and promote their economic activities (10.6 vs. 4.8 per cent). By contrast, more urban than rural poor incur debt on marriage (12.8 vs. 0.7 per cent), illness (5.6 vs. zero per cent), house construction (2.8 vs. zero per cent) and litigation (1.2 vs. 0.7 per cent).

A fresh look at the nature or purposes reveals that the poor, whether rural or urban, raise loan basically for the fulfillment of basic existential needs. Secondly, our data do not support that the poor take loan for flimsy reasons, such as for gambling and buying liquor (Desai and Pillai, 1972 140-141). May be that the poor do not want to confess these reasons when asked directly.

**Sources of Raising Loan** One traditional source of raising loans for the poor is the professional money-lenders who charge exorbitant rate of interest. Another source is petty shopkeepers who give loan in both cash and kind and make more money out of lending than by selling his goods (Desai and Pillai, 1972 143), and mercilessly exploited the money-lending fraternity who often doomed the garb of grocers (Desai and Pillai, 1972 143). Its reason is that the poor buy their basic needs daily, as they cannot hoard. Shops in the localities where the poor live sell almost everything in retail. The poor are able to buy goods they need from these shops at a small scale or retail. Although this is necessary for the poor, the shopkeeper makes profit in selling less quantity at enhanced rate. We tried to find out the sources from where the poor borrow in need. The information was elicited on two counts: general sources of borrowing and sources of borrowing during emergency. The information regarding general sources of borrowing are shown in Table 5.18.

It is evident that nearly one-fifth of the poor raise loans from their friends and relatives. Next important source

Table 5 18  
Sources of borrowing, in per cent

Sources of Borrowing	Rural Poor (N = 150)	Urban Poor (N = 250)	Rural + Urban Poor (N = 400)
General sources			
Relatives and friends	36 0	9 6	19 5
Money-lender	18 7	14 0	15 5
Shopkeepers	10 0	16 8	14 3
Employers	0 0	6 8	4 3
Neighbours	3 3	2 8	3 0
Banks	3 3	0 8	1 8
Co-operative societies	0 0	0 4	0 3
No debt	28 7	48 8	41 3
During emergency			
Friends and relatives	57 3	42 0	47 6
Money-lender	14 0	7 2	9 8
Provident fund	0 0	2 0	1 3
Do not borrow or no debt	28 7	48 8	41 3

of borrowing money is money-lender (15 5 per cent) and shopkeepers (14 3 per cent). Other sources of getting loan are employers (4 3 per cent), neighbours (3 0 per cent), bank (1 8 per cent), and co-operative societies (0 3 per cent).

The three main sources of raising loans for the urban poor are shopkeepers (16 8 per cent), money-lenders (14 0 per cent), and friends and relatives (9 6 per cent). The corresponding sources for raising loan for the rural poor are friends and relatives (36 0 per cent), money-lenders (18 7 per cent), and shopkeepers (10 0 per cent). Note that these three are most common sources of raising loans for both rural and urban poor. The main distinction is that shopkeepers are

one of the principal sources of raising loan in urban areas, and friends and relatives in rural areas

To sum up money-lender is a common source for them both. The urban poor tap more sources for raising loan than the rural poor. It is interesting to note that institutionalized credit agencies such as co-operative societies and banks are less popular with them both.

As regards the sources of borrowing during emergency, 47.6 per cent poor take loan from friends and relatives, although it is more true of the rural than of the urban poor (57.3 vs. 42.0 per cent). Next important source which the poor tap for debt is the money-lender (9.8 per cent), here again the rural poor outpace the urban poor. The least popular source of borrowing during emergency is the poor's provident fund and it is exclusively the urban characteristic (2.0 per cent).

#### Payment of Debt

It is generally said that the poor are caught into the vicious circle due to debt. The poor always remain in debt because in order to repay loans they take fresh loan. The majority of the poor (26.0 per cent) take up additional jobs to repay loan. Nearly 24.0 per cent pay the debts from their salary. It is interesting to note that 9.0 per cent poor sell their dead property to repay their loans.

For rural poor, the additional jobs, and for the urban poor, salary are the principal media for repayment of the loans (58.0 vs. 38.0 per cent). Next important source for

rural poor is the sale of the jewellery and valuables (13.3 per cent), while for the urban poor additional jobs and sale of the jewellery are equally important (6.3 and 6.4 per cent respectively)

### Case Study 3

Manonar Lal, aged 33 years, belonging to Scheduled Caste, is a migrant from a village of Uttar Pradesh. He migrated to the city in search of an employment but failed to get it. Now he is self-employed as a sweeper and earns Rs. 160-180 a month. He has to support a family of five members who are staying with him. The earning, therefore, is not enough to support his family. Though his wife, too, sometimes earns by doing the same job, yet he has to incur loans from his neighbours or from retailer where he buys domestic things. At the time of interview, he was indebted to a local money-lender because he had to incur loan to marry the elder daughter. He thus narrated his story. When asked about the repayment of the loan, he uttered

"Karz mein paida hue, karz mein marana bhi nai"

(I was born in debt, and am bound to die in debt)

### Case Study 4

Banvari, 38 years, belonging to a Brahmin caste, hails from Kursauli village. He is a petty cultivator and his monthly income ranges between Rs. 100-140. There are five members in his family. In order to support his family, he carries on a petty business of grains. He still finds

difficult to manage his family. Very often he had to take loan from the money-lender or big farmers in the village. Regarding saving his view is "Khane ko pura hota ni nahi, bachat kaisa kar payenge (earning is not enough for food, how can we save)"

In summary, then, the income of the poor ranges from low to the lowest. Most of the poor earn between Rs 100-300 a month to in such hard days as these. Average income per month per household for the rural poor comes to Rs 197.3, and for the urban poor Rs 269.6. The per capita income of the rural poor is Rs 315.60, of the urban poor Rs 660.24, and of the sample as a whole Rs 493.20. All this reflects the acute poverty of the poor.

The source of the income of the most of the households is petty cultivation and agricultural wages and/or non-agricultural wages.

The poor's perception of the reasons for their meagre income is that they have limited means of income, insufficient earning, large number of hangers-on, and low wages. While the rural poor consider the limited source of income as the cause of their meagre income, the urban poor think insufficient earning.

In most of the households, there is no earner except the principal earner, although, of course, it is more true of urban than of rural poor. The practice of child labour is found in their families. In the majority of cases, there is only one earner in the poor's family. Here urban poor out-space the rural poor.

In most of the households, there are 5-8 dependents on the chief earner. Interestingly enough, the urban poor have more dependents as compared to their rural counterparts.

The tangible reproducible wealth was analysed in terms of household material possession, house owned, land, and livestock. Most of the rural poor use and keep high cost metallic utensils, most of the urban poor use and preserve low cost metallic utensils. The main furniture in the poor's house is cot and/or planks, here the rural poor outnumber the urban poor. Radios, cycles, and chairs are almost exclusively urban poor's possessions.

The poor tame mostly milking animals such as cows, buffaloes, and goats. In some cases pigs, and hens are also domesticated by them. The domestication of animal is much more popular in rural than in urban areas. These animals are considered valuable property by the poor. The domesticated animals supplement the income of the poor.

The intangible reproducible wealth includes bank deposits, securities, life-insurances, provident fund, etc. Most of the poor are unable to save due to their meagre income. A small percentage of the poor who are able to save, they keep their savings in banks, insurance, and provident fund. This is mainly the urban phenomenon, although a small proportion of the rural poor deposit their savings in banks.

Most of the poor do not get any benefit from the welfare schemes of the public and private agencies.

The majority of the poor are indebted. They have incurred debts for domestic needs, marriage, and economic activities. More urban than rural poor are indebted. The main sources from where the poor borrow are relatives, money-lenders, friends, and shopkeepers. In emergency, the poor depend more on friends, and relatives than on money-lenders. For the repayment of debts, the poor do some additional jobs and, in some cases, sell their valuables.

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PART III

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NEED COMPONENT

FOOD

SHELTER

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## CHAPTER SIX

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### FOOD, CLOTHING AND OTHER NECESSITIES

In the last two chapters an attempt was made to present the picture of the occupational status of the poor and their income and assets. It was observed that the occupations through which the poor secure their livelihood do not carry and bring power and prestige. Also, they yield the low amount of economic return. Their ownership of capital goods and possession of the consumer goods are miserably poor. The low status of occupations coupled with meagre income, and poor capital wealth block their climbing in another position. The poor are, to borrow an insight from Karl Marx, coerced into selling their labour and thereby deprived of all control over the decision-making process. Given the all encompassing way in which the economic component of poverty affects the poor, our focus here and in the chapter to follow shifts to the basic human needs — food, clothing, and shelter, and other necessities.

A recent major document, International Covenant on Economic and Cultural Rights, states that everyone has a right "to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing, and housing, and to the continuous improvement of the living conditions" (ICECR, 1972: 155). In view of this, we shall examine now far the poor are able to meet their basic human needs in

terms of food, clothing, and shelter, and other necessities

It must be borne in mind that it is not easy to know the consumption pattern of the poor as they buy their basic needs daily due to the economic constraints. It is difficult to know how much they spend on items of food. And, for the poor's rescue, there have sprung up petty shops in their localities which sell almost every item they need. These shops sell smallest quantity of things and, thereby help poor to adjust with their purchasing power (Desai and Pillai, 1972 135). Due to the split-retail pattern of buying, most of the poor cannot say how much they spend on different items of food and other things. Despite difficulties, we collected the data on the basic human needs of the poor. Here our focus will be on (1) food, (2) clothing, and (3) other necessities.

#### FOOD CONSUMPTION

Hunger is seen as an important enemy and food as an important input into development (Green, 1981 96-103). "The conquest of hunger", says Brandt, "Calls for much broader international and domestic efforts to ensure that the additional food reaches those who need it. Government cannot sustain subsidised schemes for long, an end to hunger can only be foreseen if there are more wage earners and more equitable distribution of income" (Brandt, 1980 15).

Food is also seen as the basic human need and freedom from hunger as a basic human right. It is a global as well as a national duty to make food available to all. "The elimination of poverty is the most basic of human needs. . .

the quality of life is meaningless without health, which depends on proper nutrition and a healthy environment" (Brandt, 1980 16).

Food is related to other basic needs. Employment in agriculture and non-agricultural employment depending on food flows from countryside is stressed (Brandt, 1980 16). So are the linkage of health to diet (Brandt, 1980 55) and the devastating effect of rural destitution on ecology and sustainability (Brandt, 1980 79). The poor die very quickly and death is always a very present danger. Unless the poor can get the minimum food to survive today there will be no tomorrow to enjoy. 'Needs cannot be separated' (Brandt, 1980 90). It is underlined that more food will not overcome hunger unless the hungry produce it themselves and are enabled to achieve employment (or self-employment) productive enough and adequately to buy it.

One of the widely used indirect methods of estimating the extent of malnutrition, i.e., the nutritional status of a population, is to estimate it as that proportion of the population with energy intakes below some norm called 'requirements'. There is a further widespread use of the average energy requirements of a population in determining an absolute poverty line through the income-calorie intake relationship. There exists a consensus that a reference man in India requires 2,250 calories per capita per day (Sukhatme, 1965; Patwardhan, 1960). According to Ojha, in terms of food grains (cereals and pulses), the calories required for urban areas would be 1500 (i.e. 66.0 per cent of the total

requirements), and the same is estimated at 1800 (i.e. 80.0 per cent of total requirements) for rural areas. In quantitative terms, in order to obtain these calories food grains consumption of 518 gms per capita per day for the rural areas and 432 gms per capita per day for the urban area are estimated (Ojha, 1971 25-47, Madalgi, 1967, 1968). We relied on two simple methods of estimating the poverty quantity of food grain consumption and expenditure on food consumption.

#### Quantity of Food Grain Consumption

We tried to ascertain the quantity of per-day food grain consumption variety-wise, since both the variety and quantity of food are linked with the energy or calorie requirement for physiology of human body. Here six food items have been included: (1) wheat and wheat products, (2) rice, (3) rough cereals, (4) pulses, (5) vegetable, and (6) milk.

Wheat and Wheat Products Consumption of wheat and wheat product varies quantitywise among the poor. The majority of the poor in both rural and urban areas consume 1.0 Kg. - 1.5 Kg wheat per day per family (64.6 vs. 73.2 per cent). Those who consume at 0.5 Kg -and-less, and 0.5 Kg - 1.0 Kg. are more in rural than in urban areas (9.4 vs. 6.8 per cent, and 15.4 vs. 10.8 per cent, respectively). The proportion of those who consume 1.5 Kg -and-more is more or less equal in both the poor groups (10.6 per cent rural, 9.2 per cent urban).

The average per day per household quantity of wheat and wheat products is 692 gms for rural and 712 gms for the urban areas, and 705 gms for the sample as a whole. It shows that the differences between the rural and urban areas are consistently in the same direction, but there is tendency for wheat consumption to be higher in the urban than in the rural areas.

Rice There is almost similarity in the consumption pattern of rice of both rural and urban poor. The majority from them both rural and urban consume 0.5 Kg -and-less rice per day per household (74.0 per cent rural, 73.2 per cent urban). The percentage of those who consume 0.5-1.0 Kg rice per day per household is almost identical (18.8 per cent urban, 18.0 per cent rural). Again, there is complete similarity between those consuming in between 1.0-1.5 Kg. rice per day per household (8.0 per cent each).

The average quantity of rice consumed per day per household works out to be 335 gms for rural, and 337 gms. for the urban areas, and 333 gms. for sample as a whole. When we compare the average quantity of rice and wheat consumed per day per household, there is a major difference. In both rural and urban areas the consumption of wheat is more popular than the consumption of rice. Its one reason may be because of cheap rate of wheat and high cost of rice.

Rough Cereals Consumption of rough cereals such as Bajra, Jowar, Maize, and Barley, etc., is much popular among the poor. Its consumption varies from 0.5 Kg. to 1.0 Kg.,

or even more than that, but the majority of poor consume 0.5 Kg -and-less, or 0.5 Kg -1.0 Kg rough cereals per day per household (76.6 per cent rural, 85.6 per cent urban, and 23.4 per cent rural, 11.6 per cent urban, respectively)

The average consumption of rough cereals per day per household is 380 gms in rural, 293 gms in urban, and 299 gms for sample as a whole

The preceding analysis shows that among food grains wheat flour is relatively more popular than rice and rough cereals, for it is being used in larger quantity by a larger proportion of the poor than the other two cereals.

Pulses Pulses are the sole source of the protein for the poor. But the poor consume pulses less and less, for, a large proportion of the poor consume 0.25 Kg -and-less pulses per day per household in both the rural and the urban areas (91.4 and 98.4 per cent, respectively). The percentage of those using 0.25 Kg -and-more pulse is very small, 8.6 per cent rural and 1.6 per cent urban. The main pulse they use are gram dal and masoor dal.

The per day per household average quantity of pulse consumed by the poor varies from 136 gms in rural to 127 gms in urban to 131 gms. for sample as a whole

Vegetables Vegetable is a major source of vitamin for the poor. Cent per cent rural poor and 97.2 per cent urban poor use 0.5 Kg.-and-less vegetables per day per household. Only 2.8 per cent urban poor are able to consume 0.5 Kg.-and-more vegetables

Table 6 1

Quantity of per day per household consumption or food,  
in per cent

Food Items and Quantity in Kg /Litre	Rural Poor (N = 150)	Urban Poor (N = 250)	Rural + Urban Poor (N = 400)
<u>Wheat</u>			
0 5 Kg -and-less	9 4	6 8	7.7
0 5 Kg -1 0 Kg	15 4	10 8	12 5
1 0 Kg -1 5 Kg	64 6	73 2	70 0
1 5 Kg -and-more	10 6	9 2	9 8
Average	692 gms	712 gms.	705 gms
<u>Rice</u>			
0.5 Kg -and-less	74 0	73 2	73.5
0.5 Kg -1 0 Kg	18 0	18 8	18 5
1 0 Kg.-1 5 Kg	8 0	8 0	8 0
Average	335 gms.	337 gms.	333 gms
<u>Rough Cereals</u>			
0.5 Kg.-and-less	76 6	85 6	83 2
0 5 Kg.-1.0 Kg.	23.4	11.6	16.0
1 0 Kg -and-more	0.0	2 8	1 8
Average	380 gms	293 gms.	299 gms.
<u>Pulses</u>			
0.25 Kg -and-less	91.4	98 4	95 8
0 25 Kg -and-more	8 6	1.6	4 2
Average	136 gms.	127 gms.	131 gms
<u>Vegetables</u>			
0 5 Kg -and-less	100 0	97.2	98 2
0 5 Kg.-and-above	0.0	2 8	1 8
Average	250 gms.	257 gms.	254 gms
<u>Milk</u>			
No consumption	92.0	94.4	93 5
0.5 Litre-and-less	8.0	5.6	6.5
Average	20 ml.	14 ml.	16 ml.

The average quantity of vegetables consumed by the poor per day per household in rural areas is 250 gms and in urban areas 257 gms , while 254 gms for sample as a whole

Milk One of the rich nutritional diet is milk But the majority of the poor do not use the milk at all (94.4 per cent urban and 92 0 per cent rural) Only a small percentage from them both consume 0 5 litre-or-less per day per household

The average quantity of milk consumed by per household per day is very little i e 20 ml in rural and 14 ml in urban while 16 ml. for the sample as a whole

To sum up the consumption of pulses, vegetables, and milk is very low among the poor irrespective of their backgrounds Their main diet is wheat and wheat products, rice, and rough cereals Its obvious reason is their meagre income

#### Consumption of Fat, Sugar and Non-Vegetarian Food

In addition to cereals and vegetables, we tried to find out the consumption pattern of fat, sugar, and non-vegetarian food. Table 6 2 compresses the relevant information

Edible Oil The edible oil provides the fat to the body The majority of the households consume edible oil upto 10 gms per day (86.0 per cent rural and 72.8 per cent urban). There is relatively small percentage of households which consume more than 10 gms. of edible oil (14.0 per cent rural, 27 2 per cent urban)

The average quantity of edible oil being consumed by the poor per day per household comes to 8.4 gms. in rural

Table 6 2

Consumption of fat, sugar, and non-vegetarian food by the poor, in per cent

Items	Rural Poor (N = 150)	Urban Poor (N = 250)	Rural + Urban Poor (N = 400)
<u>Edible Oil</u>			
0-10 gms.	86.0	72 8	77 8
10 gms -and-more	14 0	27 2	22 2
Average	8 4 gms	7 7 gms	7 2 gms
<u>Sugar/Molasses</u>			
0-10 gms.	92.6	78 8	84 0
10 gms -and-more	7.4	21 2	16 0
Average	5 7 gms	7 1 gms	6 6 gms.
<u>Meat/Fish</u>			
Do not use	100.0	90 8	94 2
100 gms.-and-less	0.0	9 2	5 8
Average	0.0 gm	4 5 gms.	2.8 gms
<u>Egg</u>			
Do not use	100.0	90 8	94.2
2 eggs-and-less	0.0	9 2	5.8
Average	0 0 egg	0.09 egg	0.05 egg

and 7 7 gms. in urban areas On the whole, the average consumption is 7 2 gms

Sugar/Molasses The carbohydrate to the body comes mainly from sugar and/or molasses The sugar is generally consumed in the urban areas and molasses in rural areas. The consumption of the sugar and/or molasses is more popular among the urban than among the rural poor. Those who consume

more than 10 gms per day per household are more in urban than in rural areas (21.2 vs. 7.2 per cent)

Average consumption of sugar/molasses per day per household comes to 5.7 gms. in rural, 7.1 gms in urban and 6.6 gms. as a whole

Meat/Fish The poor sometimes consume meat as well as fish. We tried to know the quantity consumed per family per day. It is found that the urban poor outpace rural poor in consumption of meat and fish. In rural areas, there is no household consuming either meat or fish, while in urban areas there are 90.8 per cent households not consuming either fish or meat. Those who consume sometime are very less (9.2 per cent) and that too a very little quantity.

The average consumption of meat/fish per day per household is 0.0 gm for rural, 4.5 gms for urban and 2.8 gms as a whole.

Egg The poor are not able to afford the expenses for eggs too. However, the urban poor consume eggs (9.2 per cent). Cent per cent rural poor do not consume eggs, while 90.8 per cent urban poor do not consume it.

The average consumption of eggs per day per household is 0.0 egg for rural, 0.09 egg for urban, and 0.05 egg for sample as a whole.

These findings reveal that the level of consumption of edible oil, sugar, and non-vegetarian food items is very low among both the groups, whether rural or urban.

# Reasons for Preferring the Kind and Quantity of Food the Poor Take

As Table 6 3 shows, 71.0 per cent poor prefer this kind of food because they cannot afford more quantity and other kinds of food, and 12 5 per cent find it cheaper. Another 12 0 per cent take this food because it is easily available. There are only 4 5 per cent poor who take this diet because of their food-habit.

Both rural and urban poor prefer such type of food because they can afford only this (65 3 per cent rural, 74 8 per cent urban). Those who prefer this type of food due to its easy availability are more in urban than in rural areas (16 4 vs 4 7 per cent). More rural than urban poor take this kind of food due to its cheapness (24 0 vs 5.6 per cent).

Table 6 3

Reasons for the preference of the kind of food the poor take, in per cent

Reasons	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 Cannot afford for other things	65 3	74 8	71 0
2. Cheaper	24 0	5 6	12 5
3 Easily available	4 7	16 4	12 0
4 Food-habit	6.0	3 2	4 5
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

There is no marked distinction between those who take this food on account of their food-habit,

# Reasons for Preferring the Kind and Quantity of Food the Poor Take

As Table 6.3 shows, 71.0 per cent poor prefer this kind of food because they cannot afford more quantity and other kinds of food, and 12.5 per cent find it cheaper. Another 12.0 per cent take this food because it is easily available. There are only 4.5 per cent poor who take this diet because of their food-habit.

Both rural and urban poor prefer such type of food because they can afford only this (65.3 per cent rural, 74.8 per cent urban). Those who prefer this type of food due to its easy availability are more in urban than in rural areas (16.4 vs 4.7 per cent). More rural than urban poor take this kind of food due to its cheapness (24.0 vs 5.6 per cent).

Table 6.3

Reasons for the preference of the kind of food the poor take, in per cent

Reasons	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1. Cannot afford for other things	65.3	74.8	71.0
2. Cheaper	24.0	5.6	12.5
3. Easily available	4.7	16.4	12.0
4. Food-habit	6.0	3.2	4.5
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

There is no marked distinction between those who take this food on account of their food-habit,

It is, thus, clear that the poor prefer this kind of food because they are within their means, cheaper and easily available

#### Monthly Expenditure on Food

Nearly three-fifth of the poor (59.5 per cent) spend Rs. 150-200 per month per mensem on food basket while one-fifth spend Rs. 100-150. Slightly over one-tenth of the poor spend Rs. 200-250. A small proportion, say 4.2 per cent, spend Rs. 50-100 and only 3.8 per cent poor are able to spend Rs. 250-and-above per mensem per household on food items.

Those who spend Rs. 150-250 on food per mensem are in majority in both the areas (75.2 per cent urban, 64.6 per cent rural). More rural than urban households spend Rs. 100-150, and Rs. 50-100 (23.4 vs. 19.2 per cent, and 10.0 vs. 0.8 per cent, respectively). More urban than rural poor spend Rs. 250-and-above (4.8 vs. 2.0 per cent).

It transpires, then, that, the urban poor spend more than their rural counterparts, and that the majority of the poor spend a major portion of their earning on food-basket.

The average amount being spent per month per household on food basket is Rs. 160.3 for rural, Rs. 175.8 for urban areas, and Rs. 170.0 for sample as a whole.

Table 6 4

Monthly expenditure on food, in per cent

Monthly Expenditure on Food	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Pural + Urban Poor
Rs 50-100	10.0	0 8	4.2
Rs 100-150	23 4	19 2	20.7
Rs 150-200	54.6	62 4	59.5
Rs 200-250	10 0	12 8	11.8
Rs 250-and-above	2 0	4 8	3 8
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)
Average	Rs. 160 3	Rs 175 8	Rs 170.0

## CLOTHING

The normal minimum in the rural area is a loincloth or dhoti for men, a sari for women. The labourers and poor cultivators seldom bear shoes. Young children of the poor frequently go naked. However, in winters the poor do try their best to provide some clothing to the children, although not always possessed at the lowest income level. The clothing for the poor during much of the year serves the purpose of covering the body, although it, at times, serves the function of decorating. The social norm sets a cultural minimum to clothing-consumption. The clothing needs vary according to the type of activities performed and its fulfillment depends upon the poor's living standards.

In urban areas, the situation is somewhat different, although it is similar to rural areas in many respects. The rural migrants bear the clothes as they did before their

migration The youngsters among the rural migrants in urban areas try to go urban way quickly, of course, within their financial limits and limitations Others, who had lived in cities for a longer period of time, bear full paints, trousers, and pyjamas besides 'dhotis', which at times bear a large number of patches as they grow old However, the urban poor do vary in their clothing taste from their rural counterparts

The expenditure on clothing vary depending upon necessity, luxury, and partial satiation Barring exceptions, the poor's expenditure for clothing is dictated by necessity and partial satiation, the luxury expenditure takes place only when they participate in socials — domestic or outside.

The poor do not spend regularly on clothing, but a rough estimate of the monthly break-up on basis of their information has been worked out which shows that the majority of them (63.0 per cent) spend Rs. 25-and-less per month, while 23.5 per cent spend in between Rs. 25-50 Those who spend Rs. 50-75 are 11.0 per cent, and Rs. 75-and-above 2.5 per cent

The urban poor spend more on their clothing than the rural poor For instance, more urban poor spend Rs. 25-and-above than those of the rural poor (42.4 vs. 28.0 per cent).

The average expenditure on clothing per month per household is Rs. 21.4 for rural poor, Rs. 20.1 for urban poor, and Rs. 20.5 for sample as a whole

Table 6 5

Monthly expenditure on clothing, in per cent

Monthly Expenditure on Clothing	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Rs. 25-and-less	72 0	57 6	63 0
Rs 25-50	19 3	26 0	23 5
Rs 50-75	8.7	12 4	11 0
Rs 75-and-above	0.0	4 0	2 5
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)
Average (in Rs.)	21 4	20 1	20 5

EXTENT OF POVERTY IN TERMS OF FOOD CONSUMPTION

The Indian data reveals that expenditure on food-grains constitutes an important part of the total consumer expenditure particularly for the low expenditure group. In view of this, we prefer to measure the extent of poverty in terms of food-grain intake alone.

As pointed out earlier, in terms of food grains (cereals and pulses), it has been estimated that in the urban areas, the calories required would be 1500, for the rural areas the same is estimated at 1800. In order to obtain these calories, food-grains consumption of 518 gms per capita per day for the rural and 432 gms. per capita per day for the urban area are estimated (Ojha, 1971 25-47, Madalgi, 1967, 1968)

We relied on estimated quantitative norms for our measure of poverty. The actual consumption of food grains in quantitative terms has been compared with the estimated

norm, the short-fall in relation to the norm measures the poverty

The difference in terms of quantity between the minimum calorie requirements and the actual consumption represents the nutritional deficiency

Our data shows that the average consumption of food-grains per capita per day is 206 gms. in rural and 300 gms. in urban areas, while the nutritional norm for both the areas are 518 gms and 432 gms., respectively Thus, we observe a nutritional deficiency of (-60.2 per cent) in rural, and (-30.5 per cent) in urban areas (see Table 6.6).

Table 6.6

Extent of poverty based on minimum quantity of food-grain and calorie requirements

Criteria	Rural Poor	Urban Poor
1. Food-grains consumption per-capita per-day (in gms.)	206	300
2. Nutritional norm per-capita per-day (in gms.)	518	432
3. Nutritional deficiency		
a. Quantity (gms.)	-312	-132
b. Per cent	-60.2	-30.5
4. Calorie obtained per-capita per-day	716	1041
5. Calorie norms	1800	1500
6. Calorie deficiency	-1084	-459

Similarly the calorie obtained per capita per day is 716 calories in rural and 1041 calorie in urban areas, while

the calorie norm for these two regions are 1800 and 1500 calories, respectively. Thus we observe a deficiency in calorie of (-1084) in rural and (-459) in urban areas.

According to our estimate, it may be concluded that all the poor are absolutely poor in our sample.

#### CONSUMPTION OF OTHER NECESSITIES

Although less important than food, clothing, and shelter, there are certain other necessities which cannot be isolated from such absolute survival factors. In fulfilment of these necessities, cultural considerations and tastes do play important role. Among the poor groups, the principal area of other necessities are travel, entertainment, addiction, and postage (see Table 6.7).

As Table 6.7 shows, the rural poor have no expense on the postage. Only a small percentage, 4.4 per cent urban poor spend Rs. 5-and-less a month, although the majority of them also do not spend. The reason is obvious. On the whole, no member of the rural poor stays outside, whereas the urban poor do have link with their native place. The average expenditure on postage per month is Rs. 0.0 for rural, Rs. 0.11 for urban and Rs. 0.06 for sample as a whole.

Since the rural poor seldom move from their surroundings, so they have not reported expenses on travel. By contrast, a small proportion of the urban poor do spend on travel upto Rs. 10-and-above per mensem (16.2 per cent). The average expenditure on travel for urban poor is Rs. 1.04 per month.

Table 6 7

Monthly expenditure on other necessities, in per cent

Items with Expenditure	Rural Poor (N = 150)	Urban Poor (N = 250)	Rural + Urban Poor (N = 400)
<b>Postage</b>			
No expense	100 0	95 6	97 2
Rs. 5-and-less	0 0	4 4	2 8
Average	Rs 0 0	Rs. 0.11	Rs 0 66
<b>Travel</b>			
No expense	100.0	83.8	89.5
Rs. 10-and-less	0.0	14.2	9.2
Rs 10-and-above	0.0	2 0	1 4
Average	Rs 0.0	Rs 1 04	Rs. 0.65
<b>Entertainment</b>			
No expense	99.4	89.6	93.2
Rs 10-and-less	0 6	8 8	5.8
Rs 10-and-above	0.0	1 6	1 0
Average	Rs 0.03	Rs. 0 68	Rs 0.43
<b>Addiction</b>			
No expense	8.0	6 0	6.7
Rs 10-and-less	82 0	83.2	82.8
Rs. 10-20	8.7	9 2	9 0
Rs. 20-and-above	1 3	1 6	1 5
Average	Rs. 5 7	Rs 5 9	Rs 5.8

In case of entertainment too, the urban poor spend more than their rural counterparts (10 4 vs. 0.9 per cent) It may be because the commercial means of recreation are available mainly in cities. The average expenditure per mensem is Rs. 0.03 for rural, Rs. 0.68 for urban poor, and Rs 0.43 for the poor as a whole.

Of all the items of expenditure, the addition surpasses all 92.0 per cent rural and 94.0 per cent urban spend on some kind of addition. And, there is similarity between the pattern of their expenses the majority from them both spend Rs. 10-and-less on addition (82.0 per cent rural, 83.2 per cent urban) The average expenditure on addition for rural and urban poor is Rs. 5.7 and Rs. 5.9, respectively, and Rs. 5.8 for sample as a whole.

The foregoing discussion shows that both rural and urban poor spend their income's major part on food, clothing, shelter, and other necessities.

#### Case Study 5

Murari Prasad, aged 41 years, belonging to Yadava caste is from Maksudabad village. He is a petty cultivator with 3 bighas of land. His monthly income varies between Rs. 150-170. He supports a family of six members. The earning, he said, is not adequate. Hence his basic need is not met properly.

#### Case Study 6

Gulam Hasan, 32 years, belonging to Muslim community, is a resident of slum in Gwaltoli. He is a rickshaw puller and earns about Rs. 250.00 a month. There are seven family members who depend upon his earning. The money, he earns, is not enough for food. Therefore, his younger brother aged 17 years too drives a rickshaw. Even then he is not able to manage his meals both times.

In conclusion, then, the average quantity of food consumption in respect of wheat, rice, rough cereals, pulses, vegetables, and milk is very low. Similarly, there is extremely low level of consumption of edible oil, sugar and molasses, meat and fish, and eggs. There is relatively high expenditure on food.

The quantity of average per day grain consumed by the poor is too low to give them the required calorie. The condition of the rural poor is worse than the urban poor.

In conclusion, then, the average quantity of food consumption in respect of wheat, rice, rough cereals, pulses, vegetables, and milk is very low. Similarly, there is extremely low level of consumption of edible oil, sugar and molasses, meat and fish, and eggs. There is relatively high expenditure on food.

The quantity of average per day grain consumed by the poor is too low to give them the required calorie. The condition of the rural poor is worse than the urban poor.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

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### THE SHELTER

The shelter is one of the important basic needs of human being for which he has been struggling ever since (Abrams, 1964). No surprising, therefore, that most societies have developed permanent shelter structures which provide protection from elements and preserve privacy of the members of the household. Adequate housing is desideratum also because of some minimal level of decency below which no family should have to live. Not only are the shelter structures useful, but they are also symbols of the value cherished in society. They usually tell us something about the prestige structures, and attractive locations (Hoebel, 1949). The consumption has the status significance (Veblen, 1953), and of all consumption expenditures, housing has the greatest personal and financial importance, it affects the vision of the people differently (Schorr, 1966 151-164). Housing reflects, however, more than the prestige system. The housing pattern tells us about the building tradition, technology, and resources of society (Achwal, 1977), as also about the reward structure of the society. The choice of the house is limited by the income, and occupation. For instance, the slum is "the area of minimal choice", for here the "losers" congregate having in common only their poverty (McKenzie, 1961 35).

To be sure, the housing structures have several other social implications as well. First, the four-walls of the house are social facts, they limit and direct interaction (Greer and Orleans, 1962 634-646). Secondly, the clustering of similar housing creates a neighbourhood with similar people which has consequences for differential association and social behaviour. Thirdly, the address carries social meaning (Beshers, 1962). Various stereotypes are used about those who live in poor houses and neighbourhood (Roaman, 1964 59-69). Fourthly, the neighbourhood affects life chances. Fifthly, many of the public goods and services are administered by the nature of neighbourhood areas. Sixth, and finally, the spatial concentration of persons with the same ethnic background tends to limit the scope of the person's social world, his knowledge of the larger society, and his access to that society (Gans, 1962).

Thus, from the viewpoint of utility, status symbols, technology and resources, reward structure of society, choice, and social implications, the housing condition of the poor is of the vital importance. Since the poverty is said to be closely related to the shelter (Hunter, 1964, Barnes, 1931), it was thought proper to analyse poor's housing condition. The main focus of this exercise will be on ownership pattern, the kind of houses and accommodation available in them, the overcrowding and congestion and their implications, housing facilities — ancillary and essential, worthwhileness of houses during various seasons, distance of residence from place of work, reasons for residing in these houses, and

their aesthetic values, and aspiration to own a new house. All these aspects of shelter-structures will, we hope, reflect the housing condition of the poor.

#### Pattern of Ownership of Houses

The pattern of the poor's ownership of houses is clear from Table 7.1. As is evident from the table, 63.5 per cent poor have their own house and the rest of the 36.5 per cent do not have a simple refuge, providing privacy and protection against the elements. Of those who do not own a shelter, most live in a rented house (32.6 per cent), and a minority of them (3.9 per cent) share the accommodation with others like him.

A contrast between the pattern of ownership of house appears quite clearly when the two groups of poor — rural and urban, are compared. The majority of the rural poor possess their own houses (96.7 vs. 43.6 per cent). Conversely, the majority of the urban poor live in rented houses (52.4 vs. zero per cent). There is almost similarity between those sharing the accommodation with others (3.3 per cent rural and 4.0 per cent urban). The distinction between the pattern of ownership of houses of rural and urban poor is marked and significant (.01).

The houses in which the majority of the urban poor (44.3 per cent) live are owned by private individuals, followed by the public agency (12.1 per cent). The rural poor have no such solutions.

Table 7 1

The pattern of houses owned by the poor, in per cent

Pattern of Housing	Rural Poor (N = 150)	Urban Poor (N = 250)	Rural + Urban Poor (N = 400)
Pattern of ownership			
Own house	96 7 *	43 6 *	63 5
Rented house	0 0	52 4	32.6
Shared accommodation	3 3	4 0	3 9
Kind of houses			
Mud houses (Kachcha)	59 3	73 6	68 7
Hut	32 0	14 4	21 0
Mud-and-brick (Chhaliwala)	8 7	10 8	10 0
Brick-house (Pakka)	0 0	1 2	0 3
Number of rooms			
Single room but partitioned	0.0	4 0	2 5
Single-room	76 7	92 0	86 3
Two-rooms	22 0	2 8	10.0
Three-rooms	1 3	1 2	1 2

\*Significant at .05 level.

The preceding analysis indicates that private individuals acquire the land, construct houses, and rent them out to the poor. The government has not been able to provide sufficient accommodation leaving enough scope for private individuals to operate. It is further clear that the majority of the rural poor own a shelter, whereas the majority of the urban poor do not possess any shelter. Here rural poor seem to be in somewhat better position than those of the urban poor.

The data regarding the ownership of the houses by the poor may mask the reality unless the type of their houses are known. Another look at Table 7.1 shows the type of houses the poor live in. The kinds of houses owned by the poor,

in descending order, are Kachcha mud houses (68.7 per cent), huts-thatched, mud, or rags, or scrap materials (21.0 per cent), chhalliwala made of mud and brick (10.0 per cent), and pakka houses made by bricks (0.3 per cent). If the figures of the mud houses and huts are combined together, it shows that 89.7 per cent poor live in very low standard houses. Although one out of every ten poor has a house made of mud and bricks, but the quality of their houses is hardly superior to the earlier two. A small percentage (0.3 per cent) live in houses made of bricks. Perhaps these are houses constructed by the government or by private agencies and individuals.

More urban than rural poor live in mud houses (73.6 vs. 59.3 per cent) and more rural than urban poor dwell in huts (32.0 vs. 9.6 per cent). A small percentage of both the groups live in chhalliwala, i.e., houses made by mud and bricks (10.8 per cent urban and 8.7 per cent rural poor). A small fraction of solidly built houses by bricks is exclusively owned by the urban poor (1.2 per cent). May be, these are government built houses.

The real housing condition of the poor may better be known, if we look at the accommodation available in houses the poor live in. This calls for taking notice of rooms in the poor's houses. Table 7.1 shows that the vast majority of the poor (88.8 per cent) pass their life in one roomed houses. As against this, only one out of every ten poor lives in two-roomed house, and less than one out of hundred lives in a three-roomed house.

If the percentage is split rural-urban-wise, it is evident that the proportion of the poor possessing one-roomed houses is higher in urban areas (96.0 vs. 76.7 per cent) and of those possessing two-roomed houses is higher in rural areas (22.0 vs. 2.8 per cent). There is almost similarity between the status of the rural and urban poor in case of a three-roomed houses (1.3 and 1.2 per cent, respectively)

This, then, shows that the typical living accommodation is a single-room tenement (cf. Singh and D'souza, 1980: 42). Even among those living in one room, many pass their nights on the pavements, in sheds, and beneath the tree. A small proportion, say, 11.2 per cent, live in two-or-three roomed houses.

Table 7.2 summarizes the relationship between occupation, income, education, and caste of the poor, and the pattern of ownership of the houses.

The majority of the poor in rural areas from wage earning category own the house, while in urban areas wage earners own the houses in relatively lesser proportion. However, in urban areas, cent-per-cent salary earners own the house. It reveals the fact that the ownership of house is related with the kind of jobs the poor are engaged in.

Income-wise ownership of house discloses the fact that in rural areas poor from all income brackets are owning a house, while, in urban areas, the majority of the poor in the income brackets of Rs. 200-300 and Rs. 300-500-and-above do not possess house (55.7 and 60.5 per cent). The relationship

Table 7.2

Socio-cultural characteristics of the poor and pattern of ownership of houses, in per cent

Socio-cultural Characteristics	Pattern of House Ownership				
	Rural Poor		Urban Poor		Cases
	Own house	Do Not Own house	Own House	Do Not Own House	
Occupation					
Petty cultivator and agriculture wage earner	99.2*	0.8	0.0	0.0	(0)
Non-agriculture wage earner	87.0	13.0	42.7*	57.3	(171)
Self-employed/petty businessmen	0.0	100.0	46.7	53.3	(30)
Salary earner	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	(1)
Not gainfully occupied	0.0	0.0	43.7	56.3	(48)
Number of cases					(250)
Income					
Rs. 200-and-less	95.7	4.3	50.0	50.0	(34)
Rs. 200-300	98.7*	1.3	44.3*	55.7	(101)
Rs. 300-500-and-above	80.0	20.0	39.5	60.5	(76)
Number of cases					(250)
Education					
Low	96.2	3.8	93.0**	57.0	(226)
High	100.0**	0.0	50.0	50.0	(24)
Number of cases					(250)
Caste					
High	95.2	4.8	42.1	57.9	(7)
Low	97.6	2.4	43.9*	56.1	(43)
Number of cases					(50)

\*Significant at .01 level

\*\*Non-significant at .01 level

between income and ownership of house seem to be marked and significant (.01 level)

Cent-per-cent highly educated rural poor own a house, while only 50.0 per cent highly educated urban poor own

Those from low caste rural poor outweigh the urban poor in ownership of house. The relationship between two variables seem to be significant (.01 level) More rural poor from all the castes are owning a house, while in urban areas poor from all the caste have lesser chances for owning a house The caste of the poor and ownership of the house seem to be related. The difference is marked and significant

#### Congestion of Domestic Life

The number of the family members and other persons sharing the same accommodation speaks volumes about the housing condition of the poor. As is evident from Table 7.3, not a single poor live in a house alone, his rooms are shared by some one Nearly one-third of the poor live in the house with their wives and children, three-tenths with their siblings, and one-fifth with their parents. The rest of others live with their friends and relatives, near and far In other ways, in most of the cases wife, children, siblings and parents, and, in few cases, relatives and friends, share the accommodation the poor have

There is an obvious difference between rural and urban poor with regard to the people staying with them. In rural areas, more siblings (48.0 per cent) and parents (45.3 per cent) live with the poor. In urban areas, by contrast, wives and

Table 7.3

Family members and others sharing the same accommodation,  
in per cent

Persons Sharing the Accommodation	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Wife and children	1 4	51 6	32 7
Siblings	48 0	18 4	29.5
Parents	15 3	4.8	20 0
In-laws	5 3	10 4	8 5
Friends	0 0	12.8	8 0
Relatives	0.0	2 0	1 3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

children (51.6 per cent), followed by siblings (18.4 per cent) live with the poor. More relatives and friends of the urban poor live with them as compared to the rural poor (25.2 vs. 5.3 per cent). Interestingly, barring in-laws, friends and other relatives do not share the rural poor's accommodations, whereas all of them live with the urban poor. Why it is so? One reason is that friends and relatives, who migrate from rural areas, go to their relatives in urban areas. Secondly, the urban poor's constraints compel them to live with as many as less persons possible, so they live with their wife and children. Furthermore, poor's houses serve as places where the people come to stay on the basis of village, region, and caste group. In case of the rural poor, wives, children, siblings, and parents all live together unless there is separation of their joint families.

Overcrowding in the poor's houses is reflected from Table 7.4 which shows the number of persons living with them. Despite the contextual background, a large number of family members share a single room tenement. For instance, 76.7 per cent rural poor's as against 92.0 per cent urban poor's families share one roomed houses. In terms of the number of family members, these one room tenements accommodate from 2 to 7 members-and-more. However, more rural than urban poor's one room tenements accommodate 7-and-more family members. The rural poor who possess two-roomed houses again accommodate more members (7-and-above) in their tenements than the urban poor (93.9 vs 57.1 per cent). Here we find that the overcrowding in these tenements is very high, beyond what one expects.

People who live under such crowded conditions obviously have little privacy, which has effects upon interpersonal relations. "So far as the children are concerned", says Frazier, "the house becomes a veritable prison for them" (Frazier, 1957: 636). Most studies of lower-class and slum life have shown importance of peer-group relations developed under these very conditions, where slum streets, sidewalks, lanes, and alleys become important places for promoting such contacts (Jacobs, 1961). Hartman (1963: 113-131) calls this factor as an interplay of slum dwellers between "inside and outside", both in physical and social senses.

Table 7 4

Overcrowding in poor's houses according to size of family  
and number of rooms, in per cent

Number of Rooms	Size of Family							
	Rural Poor			Cases	Urban Poor			Cases
	2-5	5-7	7+		2-5	5-7	7+	
Single room but parti- tioned	0.0	0.0	0.0	(0)	70.0	10.0	20.0	(10)
Single room	12.2	37.4	50.4	(115)	51.3	28.3	20.4	(230)
Two rooms	0.0	6.1	93.9	(33)	14.3	28.6	57.1	(7)
Three rooms	50.0	0.0	50.0	(2)	66.7	0.0	33.3	(3)
Number of cases	(15)	(45)	(90)	(150)	(128)	(68)	(54)	(250)

#### Purposes for Which Rooms are Used

The quality of life and living of the poor is better reflected from the purposes for which their houses are used. As is evident from data the majority of the poor (95.5 per cent) use their living rooms for multi-purposes, such as sleeping, cooking, storing, and so on. A small percentage, say, 0.5 per cent, use these rooms for cooking and store only, and 0.6 per cent for sleeping purposes.

There is almost similarity in the purposes for which houses are used by the rural and urban poor. Both of them use rooms basically for multi-purpose (96.0 per cent rural, 95.2 per cent urban), or for cooking and store (4.0 per cent rural, 3.6 per cent urban). One distinction between the two groups is that while 1.2 per cent urban poor use their rooms

for sleeping purpose, none does so in rural areas. Briefly put, the poor irrespective of their contextual background, use their single-room tenements for all purposes, as they have no choice. For them, therefore, there is no question of rooms for separate purposes such as kitchen, bedroom, reading room, etc.

Let us pause to look at the implications of congestion of domestic life. The crowding in the home affects family relations in a number of ways (Plant, 1937). Despite the strongest desire for privacy, the compulsions of the house are such that girls must often dress, "make themselves up", move around, and sometimes use the bathroom in someone else's presence. Boys sleep in the same room as their elder perform their bodily functions in the same enclosures. Husband and wives cannot keep their intimacies or arguments a private matter. Fathers are seen in their underwear, mothers while in labour, and sisters during their period. Sometimes there are disclosures that could lead to serious consequences: abortions, incest, illegitimacy, adultery, and narcotics scars. The family is denied of a closet which every family is supposed to have: defecation, intercourse, parental arguments, and dressing.

The lack of privacy robs cultural rulings of modesty and shyness disappears. Sharing the same bathroom and bedroom threatens both affection and authority.

The matter gets further worse when the people with whom there is relation 'drop in' without warning on subsequent occasions. The domestic gatherings among the working class

people are restricted to relatives (Young and Willmont, 1962, Reiss, 1959 182-195, Berger, 1960, Litwak, 1960 385-394, Komarovsky, 1946 686-698). The social gatherings which bring together different age and sex groups are uneasy and awkward affairs. It is not surprising that families become "victims of biological, psychological and social consequences of the physical and social environment" (Indian Conference of Social Work, 1957 81)

### Housing Facilities

Let us now look at the physical facilities of shelter-structures of the poor. We divided the housing amenities into two broad categories ancillary and essential. In ancillary amenities were included light and ventilation arrangement and, in essential amenities water facility, latrine, bathroom, electric supply and kitchen room.

It is evident from the data available with us that only slightly over one-fifth of the poor's houses have provision for windows, nearly four-fifths of the houses lack ventilations. More rural than urban poor's houses have windows (49.3 vs 6.0 per cent). This, then, shows that houses, by and large, lack the ventilation. The urban poor's houses are not ventilated perhaps because they get little space and their houses and huts are made of rags, thaches, and mud. So they have provision only for entrance and exit. Rural poor have huts and mud houses which are relatively stronger than those of the urban poor's. Therefore, many of them have provision for some sort of ventilation. Furthermore, bad conditions of

housing in rural areas are, to a great extent, compensated by the lack of congestion, the limitless open spaces and fresh air in the rural areas (see Table 7 5)

We, then explored about the provision of sun light in poor's houses. It is evident from Table 7 5 that 63 0 per cent houses have no provision for sun-light. And, here again, the houses with the provision of sun-light are more in rural than in urban areas (54 7 vs 26 4 per cent)

It transpires, then, that poor's houses have edge over urban poor's house from the viewpoint of availability of sun-light in them, although there is inadequate light and circulation in the houses of them both

Table 7 5

Amenities in poor's houses, in per cent

Amenities	Proportion of the Poor's Houses with Amenities		
	Rural Poor (N = 150)	Urban Poor (N = 250)	Rural + Urban Poor (N = 400)
Ancillary amenities			
Ventilation	49.3	6.0	22.2
Sun-light	54.7	26.4	37.0
Essential amenities			
Bath-room	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kitchen	0.7	0.4	0.5
Latrine	0.0	2.4	1.5
Water-supply	0.0	2.4	1.5
Electricity	0.0	4.4	2.8

As regards the essential housing amenities, none of the houses, whether rural or urban, has separate bathroom facility. They manage to take bath in open or have curtain arrangements for that.

Likewise, the poor's houses lack separate kitchen facility, they cook where they live. Only a small proportion of rural (0.7 per cent) and urban (0.4 per cent) have a provision for separate kitchen.

In all only 1.5 per cent poor's houses have latrines, and, it is confined to urban houses only. The rural poor have no provision for latrines.

The rural poor's houses lack electricity completely, but a small fraction of the urban poor's houses have electricity (4.4 per cent). Like electricity facility, the provision for drinking water is confined to the urban poor's houses only.

The foregoing analysis reveals a very dismal picture indeed. It becomes all the more depressing in Kanpur — one of the biggest KAVAI town groups of the biggest state of India. The condition of rural households seems to be worse than urban ones.

Since the amenities like water, latrines, and electricity are essential for human survival, we further probed about how the poor manage them. For the majority of the poor, open space serves the purpose of lavatory (95.8 per cent). Only a small percentage, say, 4.2 per cent, make use of latrines. There is no latrine in rural poor's houses. They prefer to perform their ablutions in the open. They use field as far away as possible from their homes. At night, at times

the lanes and refuse heaps are used by old and adults, and small children practically always defecate immediately before their homes. People in villages do not like latrines within the house, especially near the kitchen and also they are not accustomed to it. In urban areas, too, the majority of poor use open space (93.2 per cent) resulting in discriminate defecation and urination among children and some adults. However, a small percentage of them use municipality latrines (2.8 per cent) or share latrine with others (1.6 per cent). Only 2.4 per cent have provision for latrines in their houses for private use. This further speaks of the low level of living of the poor. It may be mentioned in passing that approximately two-thirds of the slums of Kanpur have no community latrines, one latrine being used by an average of eighteen people (Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply, 1957: 15). Similar conditions have been found elsewhere (see Sen, 1960: 160 for Calcutta, Town and Country Planning Organization, 1975 for Delhi, Wiebe, 1975: 28-29 for Madras, Bhatt, 1972: 849-850 for Ahmedabad; Desai and Pillai, 1972: 49-50 for Bombay).

In so far as the drinking water is concerned, there are two main sources of procuring drinking water: wells (48.3 per cent), and public water taps (37.5 per cent). A small percentage of the poor depend on others' water taps (6.7 per cent). In some cases, water is used from ponds (6.0 per cent). In all these cases water has to be carried from some distance from the source of water. Only one out of sixty-seven poor own water tap in his house.

Table 7 6

Sources of latrine and drinking water for the poor,  
in per cent

	Proportion of the Houses with Amenities		
	Rural Poor (N = 150)	Urban Poor (N = 250)	Rural + Urban Poor (N = 400)
Sources of lavatory			
Use open space	100.0	93.2	95.8
Municipality latrine	0.0	2.8	1.7
Own latrine	0.0	2.4	1.5
Share with others	0.0	1.6	1.0
Sources of drinking water			
Wells	84.0	26.8	48.3
Public water-tap	0.0	60.0	37.5
Share with others	0.0	10.8	6.7
Ponds	16.0	0.0	6.0
Own water-tap	0.0	2.4	1.5

For the rural poor, the main sources of drinking water are wells (84.0 per cent) and ponds (16.0 per cent). As against this, the urban poor had to depend on various sources. For instance, three-fifths of the urban poor depend on public water taps, a little over one-fourth on wells and one-tenth on water taps of neighbours. Only 2.4 per cent own the taps in their houses.

This, then, shows that the poor's houses do not have adequate water facilities, and whatever sources are, they are not satisfactory from the hygienic point of view. The running water supply has yet to reach the villages in general, and the poor's localities in particular.

It must be kept in mind that there is generally short supplies of water in Kanpur city, and for that matter, in most Indian cities (Bharat Sevak Samaj, 1958 28, Bhatt, 1972, Desai and Pillai, 1972, Sen, 1960, Wiebe, 1975) Also there is inadequate distribution of water in these areas. The drinking water available is frequently contaminated Public water taps — the chief sources of water for drinking and bathing in localities poor live — are shared by a large number of families Filth and mud accumulate around public water taps

When asked about the house, one rural interviewer remarked

"Naseeb mein ghar kahan hai, jo hai bhi wah  
bhi narak se badhkar"

(It is not ordained in fate to own a house,  
whatever is there it is worst than a hell)

Similar was the response of an urban poor

### Light Arrangement

Finally, we elicited information regarding the light arrangement made by the poor in their houses. The main means of light is Dhibari, the earthen lamps or lamps made out of small bottles (82.4 per cent) As against this, 14.8 per cent use metallic kerosene lamps or lanterns Only 2.8 per cent houses have electricity.

In rural areas, there is no electricity, where the poor live Nearly 99.0 per cent use clay lamp or lamps made out of small bottles. Only slightly over 1.0 per cent use lanterns or other metallic lamps. Similar is the pattern of

light arrangement in urban poor's houses. Like rural poor, the majority of the urban poor also use clay lamps (72.8 per cent). As compared to the rural poor, relatively a larger percentage of urban poor use lantern and metallic lamps (22.8 per cent). A small proportion of them use electricity (4.4 per cent) as well.

This, then, shows that clay lamps or lamps made by small bottles are most popular means of light in the houses of the poor. Second important means is the metallic lamps or lanterns. The electricity is least used by them. While in rural areas clay lamps are popular, in urban areas all the three are used. The poor's houses, thus, lack proper agency by which objects are rendered visible during the night.

Not only that there is lack of lighting inside the houses of the poor. Even outside, there is inadequate light in their localities. Many areas plunge into near-darkness as the sun goes down. Public lighting by electricity is missing. All sorts of difficulties are faced by the poor during the night. They stumble up lanes and face difficulty in locating the latrines or open spaces for latrines at night. Their school-going children seldom find places with sufficient light to study. It is easier to escape for people committing crime in the darkness.

#### Worthwhileness of Poor's Houses in Different Seasons

The poor's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their houses may be ascertained by knowing their experiences of living during different seasons of the year.

Table 7.7 shows that the houses for the majority of the poor are insecure throughout the year and provide minimal protection from the elements. However, the urban poor find their houses more insecure than the rural poor (99.6 vs. 90.0 per cent). Among those who are satisfied with their housing condition in different seasons, the rural poor outnumber the urban poor (10.0 vs. 0.4 per cent).

Although all seasons are troublesome for both rural and urban poor, most troublesome season for them both is rainy season, followed by winter and summer. The poor's houses are built of muds or bricks without plaster and with roofs of reeds, leaves, or grass. Many huts are standing on the support of the bamboo sticks and rags and scrap materials. Some of these buildings in which poor live are structurally in a deteriorated condition and almost beyond repairs. Not a monsoon passes through without the collapse of several of the old structures resulting in death to many and untold misery to many more who are rendered homeless. The huts and mud houses develop holes or cracks through which rainy water leaks, resulting in destruction of the hard-earned clothes, grains and other household materials.

In winter season, the poor shiver under the cold waves. And, when winter is accompanied by rains, the condition becomes worse. The best season for them both is summer, as they manage to sleep in the open during the night, and under some shadow during the day. On the whole, houses of the poor are not convenient and secure throughout the year.

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Table 7 7

Poor's Perception of Worthwhileness of Houses in  
different seasons, in per cent

Perception of the Poor	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 Insecure throughout the year	90 0	99 6	93 2
2 Normal throughout the year	10 0	0 4	6 2
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

#### Reasons for Residing in Sub-standard Houses

The reasons due to which the poor are compelled to reside in the sub-standard houses are presented in Table 7 8. The majority of the poor (63.5 per cent) live in these houses because they are theirs. A little over 29.0 per cent live in them due to their lower rental value and over 4.0 per cent because of proximity to work place. A little less than 3.0 per cent find these houses close to their relatives, while 0.3 per cent had no alternative but to live in them.

The rural poor live in these houses mainly because the houses are their own (96.7 per cent). The other less important reason is the nearness of their residence to their relatives (3.3 per cent). In case of the urban poor, the main reason for staying in these houses is their lower rental value (46.4 per cent), although a significant percentage of them live there because the houses are their own (43.6 per cent). The proximity between residence and place of work

Table 7 8

Reasons for residing in the sub-standard house, in per cent

Reasons	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Own house	96 7	43 6	63 5
Low rent	0 0	46 4	29 0
Proximity to work-place	0 0	0 8	4 3
Nearness to relatives	3 3	2 8	2 9
Compulsions	0.0	0 4	0 3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

accounts for 6 8 per cent, and relatives for 2 8 per cent urban poor. A little less than half per cent had no other alternative but to live in these houses.

This, then, shows that the low rent and the ownership of houses are the twin causes for poor's stay in these houses.

#### Decoration of the Houses

We tried to go beyond mere survival to probe the aesthetic sense of the poor. A small percentage of the poor keep their houses well decorated (3 0 per cent) and it is exclusively the characteristic of the urban areas. As against this, a significant percentage of them (37 0 per cent) are not interested in decorating their houses. Here rural poor outnumber the urban poor (63 3 vs. 21 2 per cent). The lack of money deters majority of the poor (58 7 per cent) from thinking about decoration of the houses. In this case, the urban poor outnumber the rural poor (72 0 vs. 36 7 per cent). A little over one per cent find lack of time and this is exclusively

urban response This, then, shows that the poverty of the poor affects their aesthetic sense The majority of the poor (68.4 per cent) do not decorate their houses However, the main source by which the rest of 31.6 per cent poor decorate their houses are calendars and various kinds of pictures (29.0 per cent) A small proportion of the poor decorate their house with furnitures and curtains (1.3 per cent each)

The calendars and pictures are most popular means with them both, although it is more popular among the urban than among the rural poor (33.2 vs. 22.0 per cent) The furnitures is the least popular with them both (1.3 per cent rural and 1.2 per cent urban) The curtains seem to be part or only urban way of living (2.0 per cent)

Table 7.9

Decoration of the houses and obstacles in it, in per cent

Obstacles	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Lack of money	36.7	72.0	58.7
Lack of time	0.0	2.0	1.3
Not interested	63.3	21.2	37.0
It is in proper order	0.0	4.8	3.0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

## Poor's Aspiration for House

We then tried to explore the poor's aspirations<sup>1</sup> for owning a house

On the whole, 57.4 per cent poor cherish the desire to own a house. However, 42.6 per cent do not entertain in mind even such an idea. Among those who aspire for a house, the urban poor outnumber the rural poor (71.6 vs. 33.5 per cent). May be that most of the rural poor own houses, whereas the urban poor are still in need of a roof over their head.

Insofar as obstacles in owning the houses are concerned, a large proportion of the poor (65.0 per cent) feels lack of money, while 34.7 per cent perceive no source to raise loan for the construction of a house. A small percentage of the poor (0.3 per cent) feels that the authorities are not sincere in helping them to own a house.

The rural poor find it difficult to raise loan (56.6 per cent), followed by lack of money (32.7 per cent). By contrast, the urban poor's main difficulty is the lack of money (84.4 per cent), followed by inability to get loan (15.6 per cent). The indifference of authorities is the exclusive concern of the rural poor.

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<sup>1</sup>Aspiration refers to the goal set by the poor for himself. Aspiration may be real as well as ideal. Real aspiration implies what the poor are expecting to achieve or planning about, and the ideal aspiration refers to what the poor would like to achieve. According to Forest Harrison, "Real aspirations are defined as that which one expects to achieve, as that which one will be doing, or will have accomplished at some future date. Ideal aspirations are defined as that which one would like to achieve, as wishes or desires" (Harrison, 1969: 70-79, for further details see Weiss, 1961: 249-254).

Table 7 10  
Obstacles in owning a house, in per cent

Obstacles in Owning a House	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Lack of money	32.7	84.4	65.0
Inability to raise loan	56.6	15.6	34.7
Indifference of authority	0.7	0.0	0.3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

To sum up the main difficulty in owning a house is financial hardship for both rural and urban poor, whether it is in the form of lack of money or inability to raise loan.

We next examined the seriousness with which the poor wish to encounter the difficulties in owning a house. The question put to them was "Should the government give house building loan, do you think you will be able to repay it?" Nearly 53.0 per cent poor are willing to pay the housing loan in easy instalments, while 4.4 per cent plan to repay the loan by renting out their houses. The remaining 42.6 per cent have no aspiration for a house.

The rural poor who aspire for a house want to repay loan in easy instalments (33.5 per cent) and the urban poor want to repay loan mainly through easy instalments and secondarily through renting it out.

## Expenditure on the Shelter

Majority of the poor (67.2 per cent) have no expenditure for shelter. Of those who spend on shelter, 22.4 per cent poor spend Rs. 25-and-less per month, and 7.8 per cent poor spend Rs. 25-40. A small proportion of the poor (2.8 per cent) spend Rs. 40-and-above on shelter.

In rural areas, the poor are unable to tell their expenses while in urban areas, the poor spend Rs. 25-and-less (35.6 per cent), Rs. 25-40 (12.4 per cent), and Rs. 40-and-above (4.4 per cent).

The average amount of expenditure per month per household on shelter is Rs. nil for rural, Rs. 10.6 for urban, and Rs. 6.7 for sample as a whole.

It is obvious, then, that cent-per-cent poor in rural areas and a large number of poor in urban areas do not spend for housing per month. But those who pay for it, spend a high amount to meet housing facility and that too in worst condition.

We are now in a position to assess the poverty in terms of per capita expenditure.<sup>2</sup> It may be recalled that the per capita expenditure during the Sixth Plan was Rs. 61.80 for rural and Rs. 71.30 for urban areas at 1976-77 prices (The Statesman, 1978). The poor in our sample spend Rs. 24.02 in rural, and Rs. 42.11 in urban areas per capita per mensem. The per capita monthly expenditure for the sample as a whole

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<sup>2</sup>The per capita expenditure has been calculated on the basis of the total of expenditure on food, cloth, and shelter and divided by the number of family members.

works out to Rs 33 42 On the basis of this measurement, too, our respondents lag behind the actual norm or expenditure pattern

In summary, then, most of the poor do not own a house. However, among those who own a house the rural poor outnumber the urban poor. In other ways, the problem of shelter-structure is more crucial for urban than for rural poor. In absence of any house of their own, most of the urban poor live in rented houses or shared accommodation with others. The houses in which the urban poor live are owned generally by private individuals, although some houses have been built by government for the poor. The poor in the village have not been benefited by any public housing scheme.

The houses in which the poor live are predominantly kachcha (mud-houses) or huts. The majority from both rural and urban poor groups live in kachcha houses, followed by huts. By contrast, relatively lesser number of them both live in chhalliwala houses and/or pakka houses.

The vast majority of the poor live in a single-room house, the two-room and three-room houses are rare. There is overcrowding in their houses. Since there are only one room houses, they are used for all purposes of life.

The poor's houses lack ventilation. Sun-light seldom reaches there. There is no kitchen room, no bathroom and no toilet. The availability of running water is limited and inadequate, and contaminated.

There is no electricity in poor's houses. The main sources of light are clay and bottle-lamps, in few cases lamps and lanterns are used.

The houses in which the poor live fail to protect them from the elements throughout the year.

Some of the poor do have aspirations for a house, but they are all aware of the difficulties in owning them. Some of them are ready to encounter difficulties in case some agency comes forward to their rescue.

The poverty of the poor discourages their aesthetic sense as well and they do not pay attention towards decoration of the houses they live in.

The housing is conceived socially problematic on two grounds. One is the middle-class view which perceives housing as a social anchor — the notion that produces illegitimacy and early sex as a result of overcrowding. Overcrowding and congestion, poverty, crime, ill-health, and heavy risk for morality are shown to be conditions found in the places where the poor live (Ashworth, 1954: 47-48, Cavan, 1955: 87. For Kanpur, see Srivastava, 1963). Some studies have tried to show that improved housing also means improved general social conditions, including lower incidence of delinquency (see Morris, 1957). The second is the argument of equity. The reward of housing is unfairly distributed. It is necessary that a decent home and a suitable living environment for every family are made available (Abu-Lughod and Foley, 1960).

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PART IV

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RESOURCE COMPONENT

HEALTH AND SANITATION

EDUCATION

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## CHAPTER EIGHT

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### HEALTH AND SANITATION

In what has gone before, the economic and need components that constitute the vector of poverty have been discussed. Now it is worthwhile looking at the poor's command over resources. This we propose to examine in terms of health and education. The present chapter is concerned with the former, reserving the latter for the next one. Let us, therefore, in the beginning of discussion seize the opportunity to introduce the concept of health and its significance for the individual and society.

The simplistic view, now current among medical authorities, treat illness as any state that has been diagnosed as such by a competent professional. Here the health and illness have medical overtones and refer to bodily conditions. Obviously, such a notion is deceptive as many illnesses and infirmities are never brought before the professionals for diagnosis. Also, the professionals differ in their diagnosis (Zigler and Phillips, 1961 69-75). Others define illness in terms of the patient and, for them, whoever feels ill should be regarded as sick. This notion of illness calls attention to that personal feeling that leads the patient to the doctor and initiates medical action. However, the subjective criterion creates difficulty in distinguishing between bio-negative feeling and an objective state of disease (Engel, 1961 18-22).

From the psychological viewpoint, the disease is viewed in its relationship to the whole person. It tends to emphasize that disease is more than a symptom and perhaps to speak of sick people rather than of diseases. From this standpoint, it is customary to refer to a psychologically disturbed person as 'sick' or 'ill', implying that his condition is not physiological. However, one cannot separate the problems of social illness from the problems of mental illness. Mental health involves interaction among the individual's strengths, the stresses imposed by the social milieu, and the supports provided by the social environment. Currently, there appears a tendency to adopt a broadier connotation of health. World Health Organization (WHO) inserted the following definition in its constitution: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of diseases" (WHO, 1948: 100; Galen, 1923). This definition, according to a critic, is utopian and "sounds more like a coma than health" (Hudson, 1966: 600). A close look at the various definitions of health leads to the conclusion that social and psychological variables are very much involved in the sickness, and that these factors must be reconciled with the clinical concept of sickness. Differently put, there is certain combination of both organic and non-organic factors in the health and illness.

The vital sociological significance of health is twofold: one, illness, if prevalent in the society, has enough potential to disrupt the social system, and, two, illness has substantial social determinants and components.

So the last two centuries have been unparalleled improvements in human health. One can notice a fall in mortality rates, transformation of the age-structure of the population, virtual elimination of (or, at least, control over), the major infective and parasitic diseases, and the enlargements of the average life span of human beings. These improvements are, without doubt, the reflection of the reductions in the risk of disease and sickness, and of betterment in the level of physical welfare during the life time. To be sure, the betterment of human health has occurred not in isolation but alongside a number of other changes in material life. Among those that are causally linked to health include (1) extensive improvements in the sufficiency and variety of the human diet, (2) a sanitation of human existence brought about by public control over the supply of clean water and the disposal of sewage, (3) a transformation in average housing standards, (4) a revolution in the process of biological reproduction; and (5) real progress in medical knowledge and technique. These transformations of material existence are a central feature of both industrial capitalist, and to a somewhat lesser extent, of individualistic socialist (collectivist) civilizations. However, there is a wide distinction in these improvements between developed and developing parts of the world.

There are two dominant approaches concerning the theme of social and economic determinants of health, illness, and medical care. One is the Marxist, and the other is the capitalist approach. The Marxist approach finds a close connection between disease, capitalism and medical science.

The hallmark of this approach is that all that is bad for human health in the contemporary world is traceable to the global influence of the capitalist mode of production and the contemporary crisis in health care is caused by the contradictions of capitalist social organizations. Doyal and Parnell in their book, The Political Economy of Health (p. 94) identify four causal connections. The adherents of this approach identify four: (1) The risk of accidents in the world of work, which are said to be linked to the process of capital accumulation, (2) Industrial pollution, asserted to be worse because of the profit motive, (3) The consumption of harmful commodities which are thought to be more profitable than the unarmful commodities, and (4) Stress because "for a variety of reasons a capitalist mode of organization will entail large number of people leading particularly stressful lives" (For Doyal and Parnell's critic see, Hart, 1982). The capitalist approach to the analysis of social and economic determinants of health, illness and medical care rejects the logic of the Marxist approach (Hart, 1982: 435-443). It argues that industrially developed societies have revolutionized human health (McKeown, 1976, Cochrane, 1972, Dubos, 1975). Capitalism, they argue, has nothing to do with the bad health of any country. The health is, in fact, related to the internal condition of the society.

Be as that may, the fact remains that the health of the poor in developing countries is poor and their material condition is also bad. In addition, these countries suffer from the lack of data on the problems of health in general, and of the poor in particular, on which to base a scientific analysis

or the situation. Its one reason is that social scientists are not generally trained to collect medical data and medical specialists only rarely collect data on health of the poor. Keeping in view the social scientists' limitations, we shall make an attempt to present the problems of health of the poor in the pages that follow.

Health can be regarded as a consequence of consumption levels, occupation, and condition of work, availability of medical services, sanitation, water supply, and a variety of other ecological variables, including climate and the prevalence of certain type of diseases and their carriers. Cultural factors, educational levels and associated behaviour patterns also clearly play a role (Sorokin, 1976). Many of these have been examined in the earlier chapters, here our focus will be mainly on (1) treatment, (2) nutrition, (3) awareness of the prevailing diseases, (4) preventive measures, (5) hygiene, and (6) apathy of the medical officials.

## 1 Treatment of Diseases

We saw in Chapter Three that the poor live in dirty and unclean places. Their dwellings and neighbourhoods lack sufficient facilities like water and latrines. In absence of the light in their houses, there is damp and darkness. The overcrowding and congestion had made the living further worse. The presence of rats, cockroaches, and other pests further complicate the problems of health and sanitation. These factors have combined together to cause high death and disease rates.

It must be mentioned in passing that the rates of disease, chronic illness and infant mortality are exceptionally high in the slum areas of developing countries as a whole, and not a peculiar feature of India alone (U N , 1957, Hunter, 1964 77, Clark, 1965 31) Furthermore, just as the poor are deprived in different domains of life, similarly, they are also deprived in matters of health. The evidence is there to suggest that the poor are considerably less healthy than the remainder of the population (Lerner, 1969, 69-112). Not only physically, but mentally too, the poor are found to be more problematic than the non-poor. Fried observed "The evidence is unambiguous and powerful that the lowest social classes have the highest rates of severe psychiatric disorder in our society" (Fried, 1969 113). Not only the poor groups receive a different quality of care for physical illness but even the stresses and anxieties associated with illness are treated differently according to social class. For the poor, the treatment of disease is one of the major preoccupation. A series of informations related to the treatment of diseases was, therefore, elicited. To begin with, let us look at the poor's preferred treatment and agencies they go in for seeking the medical treatment.

### Preferred Treatment

As Table 8.1 shows the most preferred treatment of the poor is allopathic (52.3 per cent), followed by herbal (28.0 per cent), Ayurvedic (16.4 per cent), and homeopathic (3.3 per cent) medications. Whereas more urban poor go in for

Table 8 1

The type of medications preferred, in per cent

Medications	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Allopathic	7 3	79 2	52 3
Herbal	74 0	0 4	28 0
Ayurvedic	16 0	16 8	16 4
Homeopathic	2 7	3 6	3 3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

allopathic treatment (79 2 vs 7 3 per cent), more of the rural poor opt for the herbal medication (74 0 vs 0 4 per cent) Ayurvedic (16 0 per cent rural and 16 8 per cent urban), and homeopathic (2 7 per cent rural and 3 6 per cent urban) medications are almost equally popular with them both

This, then, suggests that the most popular treatment with the poor is allopathic and the least popular is homeopathic. The urban poor mainly go in for allopathic medicine, while the rural poor's choice remains herbal curatives.

#### Agencies Poor Approach For Medication

Insofar as the agencies the poor approach for seeking medicare is concerned, nearly 34 0 per cent poor go to the private medical clinics (33 7 per cent) and over 28.0 per cent to public hospitals for the treatment. It is interesting to note that nearly one-fifth of the poor try their own medicine or get treatment from laymen such as quacks (16 3 per cent),

and magician/ojha — one who claims to be known and handling dead spirits — (2.4 per cent)

More urban than rural poor seek treatment from the public hospitals (45.2 per cent vs. zero per cent), and private clinics (41.2 vs. 31.2 per cent). As against this, more rural than the urban poor try their own medicines or fall prey to the quacks (28.0 vs. 9.2 per cent) and magicians/ojha (6.7 per cent vs. zero per cent).

One rural informant commented

"Gaon mein kahan aspatal, khar-biraiya aur gharelu dawa se hi kam chalta hai"

(where is the hospital in the village, the herbs and home-made medicines work out)

The urban informant had to say differently

"Majburi mein neem hakim ke pas jana padata hai, sarkari doctor hamari sunate hi nahi aur din bhar chala jata hai"

(we had to go to quacks under constraints as government doctor does not listen to us and the whole day is lost in the hospital)

The preceding analysis, then, suggests that the urban poor rely more on scientific treatment, such as public hospitals and private medical practitioners. By contrast, the rural poor depend more on traditional and non-scientific treatment, viz., trial of their own herbal medicines, or consultation with quacks, or meeting magicians/ojhas.

Let us pause to explain the differentials between the rural and urban poor and the inability of a significant percentage of the poor not deriving benefits of the public medical facilities. First, more medical facilities are centred in cities and the villages lack such facilities.

Table 8 2

Agencies the poor approach for seeking medical treatment,  
in per cent

Sources	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Private clinics	21 3	41 2	33 7
Public hospitals	0 0	45 7	28 3
Own medicine	44 0	4 4	19 3
Quacks	28 0	9 2	16 3
Magicians/ojhas	6 7	0 0	2 4
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

Also, the available medical structure is inadequate. Irrespective of the background, the public hospitals suffer from understaffing, corruption is wide-spread, medical services are nominally free and whatever medicines are there, they are siphoned away in the black market. All these factors put much medicine beyond the reach of the poor. Even if there are adequate services, there is the problem of prejudice of officials towards the poor — a point on which we shall return soon. The elitist bias of the society has further resulted in the development of medical infrastructure which suits most to the rich but is beyond the reach of the poor. All this has resulted in creation of norms of medical behaviour which restricts the possibility of developing simple but effective type of medical intervention for the population as a whole (Blaikie, 1972; Illich, 1975). Furthermore, many of the poor people would not avail themselves of modern medical care, even if these services were adequate for the simple reason

that they do not easily accept the scientific explanations for disease and death. When they do seek medical care, they often go to 'quack' doctors simply because they charge less for their services and drugs than do government or, private clinics of better repute.

#### Available Treatment Facilities

'What sorts of treatment facilities, are available in or near the localities?' was another question put to the poor. It transpires from their responses that there is no treatment facility available in the localities where the majority of the poor live (59.7 per cent). There are, however, private dispensaries in poor's localities as revealed by 35.5 per cent poor. The public hospitals are very few (4.8 per cent).

Rural-urban-wise split of the percentage reveals that the rural poor's localities have very little treatment facility (1.3 per cent). The picture is somewhat different in urban areas. There are both private (56.0 per cent) and public dispensaries (7.6 per cent) where the poor get treatment.

This leads to various interesting conclusions. First, more urban than rural poor get various types of treatment facilities. Secondly, the urban poor are in a better position to draw benefits from the public health facilities as compared to their rural counterpart. Thirdly, the major source of treatment for both rural and urban poor is the private dispensaries. Here again, the urban poor outnumber the rural poor. Thus, from the viewpoint of treatment, the urban poor are in somewhat advantageous position than the rural poor,

although, of course, there are inadequate medical facilities in both rural and urban slum areas

The preceding analysis shows that most of the poor have little contact with professional members of medical care and rely more on lay treatment. Even though the poor know their diseases, their first recourse is to the "lay referral network" which often consists of pseudo- and paramedical healers, such as fortune tellers, medicines, herbalists, or makers of home remedies. Later it may include semi-professionals, such as the chiropractor, the faith healer, and so on. Only after a series of successive failures at treatment, such individuals come to official health agencies for treatment. To put it differently, it is not the part of the tradition of medical care for the poor groups to seek competent professional care at an early stage of illness. This may be because of high medical costs, lack of familiarity with modern medical practice, a general apathy from all official agencies and so on (Rosenblatt, 1965 69-76). The poor are less informed than other social groups about general health matters, they depend more on lay advice and they are relatively powerless in the medical care system. Its one result is that the poor "provide incomes for doctors . . . who are too old, poorly trained, or incompetent to attract more affluent clients (Gans, 1972 279-280)

#### Satisfaction with the Available Medicare

We fathomed the satisfaction level of the poor with the treatment. Table 8.3 shows that, on the whole, the poor are

Table 8 3

The poor's satisfaction with the available treatment,  
in per cent

Satisfaction with Available Treatment	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Yes	0 0	2 8*	1 8
No	100 0*	97.2	98 2
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

\*Level of significance 05

dissatisfied with the kind of treatment they get (98 2 per cent) What is true for the sample as a whole is also true for the rural and urban sample separately the majority from both rural (cent-per-cent) and urban poor (97 2 per cent) are dissatisfied As against this, only a small percentage of the poor are satisfied with the available medical services (1 8 per cent) and that, too, are found exclusively in urban areas (2 8 per cent)

To sum up the majority of the rural and urban poor are dissatisfied with the kind of treatment they are able to get Since ~~or~~ the urban poor avail public-hospital facilities, a small percentage feel satisfied. The lack of access to medical services arises either because the medicines are costly or because of the use of status hierarchy, or because the social power restricts their use to certain groups of the population.

We may now look at the relationship between education, occupation, income, and caste, and the satisfaction with the medication

Table 8 \*

Socio-cultural characteristics of the poor and satisfaction with treatment, in per cent

Socio-cultural Characteristics	Satisfaction with Available Treatment			
	Rural Poor		Urban Poor	
	Satis- fied	Dissat- isfied	Satis- fied	Dissat- isfied
Occupation			Cases	Cases
Petty cultivator and agriculture wage earner	0.0	100.0	(126)	0.0
Non-agriculture wage earner	0.0	100.0	(23)	97.7
Self-employed/petty businessmen	0.0	100.0	(1)	100.0
Salary earner	0.0	0.0	(0)	100.0
Not gainfully occupied	0.0	0.0	(0)	93.8
Number of cases			(150)	(250)
Income				
Rs. 200-and-less	0.0	100.0	(70)	100.0
Rs. 200-300	0.0	100.0	(75)	97.0
Rs. 300-500	0.0*	100.0	(5)	96.0
Number of cases			(150)	(250)
Education				
Low	0.0**	100.0	(131)	96.9
High	0.0	100.0	(19)	100.0
Number of cases			(150)	(250)
Caste				
High	0.0*	100.0	12)	92.1
Low	0.0	100.0	(20)	97.9
Number of cases			(32)	(50)

\* Significant at .01 level

\*\* Non-significant at .01 level.

While cent-per-cent rural poor are dissatisfied with the available treatment of all occupational groups, a small percentage of urban poor from non-agricultural wage earner, and not-gainfully employed are satisfied to some extent (2.3, and 6.2 per cent respectively). This shows that there is positive relationship between occupations of the poor and their satisfaction with the treatment.

The rural poor from all income brackets are dissatisfied with the medication they get (cent-per-cent), whereas the urban poor falling in the income bracket of Rs 200-300, and Rs 300-500 are relatively satisfied (3.0 and 4.0 per cent, respectively). Here again, there is difference between the level of satisfaction with the available treatment of the two groups of poor. Relatively more urban than rural poor are satisfied. With the increase in income, the level of satisfaction also rises in the case of urban poor. However, there seems to be positive relationship between the income and satisfaction (0.01 level).

When the relationship between education and the level of the poor's satisfaction with the available treatment is analysed, it transpires that the two are not significantly related (0.01 level). Only 3.2 per cent low educated urban poor seem to be satisfied with the available treatment.

More urban poor belonging to the high than the low caste are satisfied (7.9 vs. 2.1 per cent). But the caste has no relationship with the poor's level of satisfaction in the rural areas. It suggests that there is a positive relationship between caste and the level of satisfaction (0.01 level).

Reasons for Improper and  
Inadequate Medication

A glimpse of the reasons advanced by the poor for not getting proper and adequate medical treatment may be had from Table 8 5. Over two-fifths of the poor feel that they do not get proper treatment in the hospitals due to the apathy or hospital staff, rather they are looked down by them (42 7 per cent). Another forceful reason for getting improper and inadequate treatment is the high cost of medicare the medicines are costly (21 0 per cent) and the fee charged by the physicians is very high (15 8 per cent). The third reason of the inadequate and improper treatment is the financial hardship (10 5 per cent). The last reason suggested by them is the lack of public hospitals and other medical facilities (10 0 per cent).

Relatively a large percentage of the urban poor feel that they are not being given proper care in the public hospitals and more rural poor face the financial hardships and lack of treatment facilities

Table 8 5

Reasons for improper and inadequate treatment,  
in per cent

Reasons	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Apathy of medical officials	15.3	59.2	42.7
Costly medicines	24.0	19.2	21.0
High fee of physicians	29.3	7.6	15.8
Lack of public hospitals	20.7	3.6	10.0
Financial hardship	10.7	10.4	10.5
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

In conclusion, then, the economic and cultural factors come in the way of their proper treatment. On the economic level, the poor fall at the bottom of the occupational ladder, and earn a meagre income. The adequate utilization of the medical care is constricted by the lack of money. On the cultural level, the poor lack the sophistication in dealing with metropolitan and public agencies offering services for the ill and indignant. Also, the poor's own concept of disease and illness, or seeking medicare, and of treatment and rehabilitation differ from those of the nonpoor. The poor, as they possess low level of education, are also largely ignorant about the elaborate patterning of the medicare services offered.

## 2 Nutrition

Low levels of food intakes makes a man susceptible to a variety of infectious diseases, some of which, in turn, reduce nutrient absorption (Scrimshaw, Taylor and Gordon, 1968). So health is closely associated with nutrition. The sick diet, a special type of nutrition, is of further importance for them who already suffer from malnutrition. The findings of micro studies and clinical reports reveal that the poor in urban areas suffer from malnutrition and there is shortage of fat, carbohydrate, protein, and calorie requirement (Singh, 1980 70-72, Mukherjee, 1975 81-82, 104). Some studies based on macro-statistics compared the nutritional status of slum dwellers and their counterparts in the villages and indicate that the urban poor are worse off (Apte, 1977 266-278, Dandekar and Rath, 1971 25-48, 1971 106-146). We have already

examined at length the food consumption pattern of the poor in Chapter Six. Here we shall focus only on sick diet. "Do you manage to provide the sick-diet to the sick in the family?" was the question put to the poor. The responses in Table 8.6 reveal that 65.3 per cent poor manage to provide a small quantity of milk to the sick and 3.0 per cent tonic. As against this, 31.7 per cent poor are unable to give even this much or sick-diet to the patients in the family. Interestingly, there is almost complete similarity between the pattern of providing the sick-diet to the sick by the rural and urban poor. Still more rural than urban poor fail to manage sick-diet to the ailing members (34.0 vs 30.4 per cent).

Table 8.6

The poor's capacity to provide sick-diet to the patients,  
in per cent

Sick-Diet	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Milk	64.0	66.0	65.3
Tonic	2.0	3.6	3.0
Unable to afford	34.0	30.4	31.7
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

### 3 Awareness of the Diseases

Various sorts of diseases — epidemic, contagious, and sporadic — are reported to be found in the slums in cities and villages. Earlier studies report that the poor are less

are aware of the diseases than what they actually suffer from. For instance, the people themselves complained mostly of stomach disorders, fever, and measles, whereas the attending physicians found that they were, in fact, suffering from such common diseases as dysentery, diarrhoea, hookworms, roundworms, malaria, typhoid, and tuberculosis (Singh, 1977 241-265, PCPO, 1975 181, Desai and Pillai, 1972 103, Singh and De'souza, 1980). We tried to ascertain from our sample whether the poor are aware of various prevailing diseases. The response of the poor to the question, "what kind of diseases generally affect the people here?" reveals that cent-per-cent poor in rural areas are not aware of any specific disease whatsoever. As against this, 36 per cent urban respondents say the people suffer from small-pox, cholera and T B. We ascertained the prevailing diseases in rural and urban areas from the civil hospitals. It was reported that diarrhoeas, dysentery, hookworms, roundworms, malaria, and tuberculosis are most common diseases. Despite the fact that most of the poor in both rural and urban slums are the victim of various sorts of diseases, still they are not aware of the disease they really suffer from.

#### 4 Preventive Measures

'Prevention is better than cure' says the saying. That is why, the modern medical care lays much emphasis on the preventive measures. The two preventive measures are most popular, among others, immunization and destruction of carriers of disease. The immunization against communicable

diseases provides immunity to resist the onslaught of diseases and thereby arrests their spread. Side by side disinfectant and insecticides are sprayed to kill the germs of various diseases. We investigated about the extent of the use of both these preventive measures.

It was found that the poor, irrespective of their background, do not readily accept immunization against diseases. Many believe in fate and many are guided by their traditional beliefs. For instance, small pox is treated by offering prayers to 'Snitala Mata' (the Mother Goddess). Furthermore, if someone has single inoculation, vaccination, or oral administration, he believes that it will provide him lifelong immunity. Rumours are spread very fast against immunization of children. It is said that children would die or the government is trying to reduce the population.

As regards the use of disinfectants by the medical authorities in the areas where the poor live, the majority of the poor report that no disinfectant was sprayed in their houses and localities. Only 20 per cent poor inform that long ago disinfectants like D D T, and phenol, were sprayed in their localities.

There is almost similarity between the pattern of use of disinfectants by the medical authorities in the rural and urban poor's localities, as 98.7 per cent rural and 97.6 per cent urban poor report that the disinfectants were not sprayed.

## 5 Hygiene

The preservation of health depends to a large extent on the cleanliness of the self and surroundings. We, therefore, enquired about conditions and practices conducive to the preservation of health (or illness) from both personal and public hygiene point of view.

### Personal Hygiene

It was observed that the men, women and children all were in dirty cloth and unkempt appearances. A cloth for men, a sari for women and a shirt without underwears for children is normal minimum for rural poor. Some urban poor male wear fullpants full of patches and holes along with dhotis. Women's and children's dresses are more akin to those of their rural counterparts. Young children frequently go naked. The condition of cloth of the children, particularly of those not in school is striking. Their hairs are matted and uncombed, and clothing is filthy and ill-fitting. Due to uncleanness, many men and children suffer from scabies and other skin diseases. There are, however, some occasions, particularly the religious festivals, when the old and young are quite neatly and cleanly dressed. It is not possible at the lowest income levels to provide adequate dress during winters even. Since poor cannot afford shoes, there is little protection against hookworm which enters the body through the soles of the feet. The teeth are dirty both because of smoking and non-washing.

## Public Hygiene

The glimpse of the public hygiene may be had from the conditions and practices of both private and public agencies. The poor localities in the city are notoriously unclean. Refuse is everywhere. Generally rubbish, trash, and garbage are left on the streets. In urban slums, the sweepers dump refuse over already dumped ones. And, of interest, this refuse is usually used as latrines by the poor's children. All this presents sickening sights and offensive odours. These are the chief means of spreading diseases like dysentery and cholera among the populace. The garbage serves as breeding ground for flies which have a ready access to faecal matters (cf , Desai, 1957 86, Prabhu, 1956 75-76; Iyenger, 1957, Venkatarayappa, 1957 128-130). The sanitation practices in villages are not very different. There are "dung heaps" here and there. There is dirt and offending smell (cf Gandhi, 1947 134).

Due to compulsions imposed by poverty, "the poor buy goods which others do not want and thus prolong their economic usefulness, such as day-old bread, fruit and vegetables which would otherwise have to be thrown out, second-hand clothes, and deteriorating automobiles and buildings" (Gans, 1972 275-289). The use of the useless edibles further affects the health of the poor.

We ascertained from the poor themselves whether the edible things they buy are kept covered or open. The majority of the poor buy edible things from such hawkers and shops who keep their goods uncovered (98.3 per cent). In urban areas,

a small percentage reported that the shopkeepers (2.8 per cent) keep the edibles covered, but in rural areas cent-per-cent say shopkeepers keep edibles uncovered

#### Sewers and Passage Ways for Bad and Stagnant Water

We tried to ascertain whether the areas in which the poor live had sewers for receiving the discharge from house-drains and streets, and/or there is drainage to drain off bad and stagnant water, sewage, or other liquids. The data suggests that the slums in cities and villages lack sewers and drains. Whatever drains are, they are generally open and choked because the refuse is shoved into them. For instance, in urban slums 99.6 per cent poor informed about the non-availability of sewage system while cent-per-cent do so in rural areas. What is true for sewers is also true for drainage. Neither in urban slums nor in the villages, there are passage ways for bad and stagnant water.

It may be concluded then that the poor in urban slums as well as villages live in filthiest surroundings affecting health of them and their families.

Another way to keep the surroundings clean is the provision for parks — a piece of ground for public recreation, or kept in its natural condition as a nature reserve, or the like. The poor, irrespective of their contextual background revealed that there is no provision for public place or parks where they and their children may assemble for recreation or could be close to nature. In rural areas, there

is no public place or park but here the problem is less serious as there is abundance of open space. In urban areas, barely 0.4 per cent poor revealed that there is a public place in their localities. This shows that there is lack of park and public places in the localities poor live both in rural or in urban areas.

## 6 Apathy of the Medical Officials

The localities where poor live are treated as inferior. The poor are isolated and excluded from power and participation. They lack an effective means of communication with outside world because of apathy and their own powerlessness to make their voices heard. The local politicians manipulate frequently for their own benefit (Zorbaugh, 1929: 152, Hollingshead, 1949: 110-111). We saw earlier that the poor nurture the feeling that the medical officials are apathetic to them in attending them and keeping their localities clean. We went a step farther to learn the apathy of the public health department towards the poor.

The interest of the medical officials in maintaining health of the poor and keeping control over diseases is reflected from visits they pay in localities the poor live. It is interesting to note that 96.0 per cent poor say the officials of the health department never (or almost never) visit their localities. Only 3.0 per cent admit they visit their localities rarely. However, one out of every hundred poor say, the visit of health staff is frequent. The health department officials neglect the poor localities of villages.

almost completely, as only 0.7 per cent say that they pay visit to their villages. By contrast, 6.0 per cent urban poor say that the health officials visit their localities.

The findings reveal that the poor localities of both rural and urban areas do not attract health official's attention. However, the rural poor's localities remain more neglected as compared to the urban poor's localities.

#### Monthly Expenditure on Medicines

More urban than rural poor spend towards medicines (14.4 vs. 7.4 per cent), although the majority from them both do not spend much on medicines. It is not that they do not fall ill, but only because they cannot afford. The average amount being spent per month on medicines is Rs. 0.36 in rural, Rs. 1.4 in urban areas, and Rs. 0.76 for sample as a whole (see Table 8.7).

Table 8.7

Monthly expenditure on medicines, in per cent

Monthly Expenditure on Medicines	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
No expense	92.6	85.6	88.2
Rs. 10-and-less	7.4	8.8	8.2
Rs. 10-20	0.0	4.4	2.8
Rs. 20-and-above	0.0	1.2	0.8
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)
Average	Rs. 0.36	Rs. 1.4	Rs. 0.8

### Case Study 7

Bechulal, 37 years of age, Scheduled Caste, comes from Kursauli village. He is a shoe-maker in weekly markets held in nearby places. He earns Rs 75-100 a month. He narrated that he is so poor that he cannot afford for medicines. Even in case of serious sickness or the family members, he feels his inability to take them to a doctor. His father suffered from, and died of, tuberculosis, he could not give proper treatment to him.

### Case Study 8

Patwari, 44 years old, belonging to Saini caste lives in Loharan ka Bhatta slum. He is working as a domestic servant and earns Rs 150 a month. With this earning, he is always from hand to mouth. His children are undernourished and physically weak. Very frequently they fell ill. He does go to the civil hospital but feels that nobody pays proper attention to him. He feels that medicines supplied by the hospital do not work, and medicines from outside are beyond his reach. Furthermore, the whole working day is lost in waiting for his turn to come in the hospital.

In summary, then, the allopathic treatment is most preferred by the urban poor and herbal medications by the rural poor. The urban poor, therefore, rely more on civil hospitals and private clinics and the rural poor on quacks and herbalists. There is lack of medical facilities in and around the localities poor live and here, too, the rural

localities suffer more. The poor are, by and large, dissatisfied with the medical treatment they receive. More is the poor income, low education, manual work, and low caste, worse is the level of satisfaction. The major difficulties in getting proper treatment are costly medicines, high fee of physicians, financial hardships, lack of medical facilities, and apathy of the medical officials.

The poverty is so acute that the poor are not able to provide the sick diet to the sick.

The poor are ignorant of the various diseases, they suffer from or, are prevalent in their localities. The rural poor are more ignorant than their urban counterparts.

The poor do not welcome immunization and are prey to the unfounded rumours. The health department officials do not pay much attention towards using disinfectant in poor's localities.

The level of personal hygiene is very low and the condition is worst at the public level. The edibles are sold open. There is lack of sewers and drainages as well as of parks in their localities.

The medical officials do not visit their localities, thereby depriving them of the specialists' succour and advice.

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## CHAPTER NINE

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### EDUCATION

Education is the central determinant of life-chances of man in modern society. It is linked with one's occupation and income and serves as "the key that unlocks the door of modernization" (Harbison and Myers, 1964 181, Anderson, 1966). Education "is a key way through which parents transmit their socio-economic levels, values, political behaviours and lifestyles to their offsprings" (Mare, 1981 72). Some even go to argue that education contributes to the equalization of income in society (Kravis, 1962, Lenski, 1966, Milner, 1972, For the opposite, see Jencks, 1972, Neubeck, 1972.159-166, Gans, 1973, Okun, 1975). The formal schooling expanded as a result of class conflict (Gorelick, 1982 203-223) and it still remains scarce and unequally distributed resource<sup>1</sup> and characteristically limited to those of high status. Thus, from the viewpoint of employment, earning, social status, and socialization, the education has become a dominant feature of modern society.

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<sup>1</sup>For example, in England, universities were largely the "preserves of the aristocratic and gentry classes" (see Halsey, 1961 458). Prior to the American Civil War, college education in the United States was primarily for "gentlemen" (see Hofstadter and Hardy, 1952 11).

(see Halsey, 1961 458, Horstadter, 1952 11, UNESCO, 1966, Drucker, 1961 15, Welter, 1962 47, Glass, 1961 394)

The sorry situation of the school in the urban and rural slums is fairly well-known. The classes in the urban schools slum (Plapinger, 1964 47-51, Berkman, 1962 62-67), are overcrowded, the school buildings are dilapidated, teachers are underpaid but overworked, textbooks are outdated, and so on. All this and more are part of the public record and consciousness (The Panel on Educational Research and Development, 1964 30). In rural areas, at several places, there is no building for schools, they are run underneath the trees in all seasons. There is no proper arrangement for sitting, not even tat-patti (mats) is made available. There is no blackboard, and no amenities. The poor in villages do not have even minimal things to provide to their children, and hence they had to go to school half-naked and do not have books to read. The school child suffers from personal handicaps in villages and slums (Shostak, 1965 62-69).

The urban slum environment and poor rural milieu handicap a child educationally, almost since birth. The children lack intellectual and sensory stimulations, a necessary prerequisite to formal schooling, "Mental alertness and in particular, the ability to handle abstractions, depend physiologically on a broad diversity of experience in the environment of early childhood" (Silberman, 1964 278). Such diversity is absent from these areas. The deprived youngsters are failing in school and dropping out. They do not learn to read properly,

some begin to hate themselves and the system that makes their failure public (Baldwin, 1963 42-44, 60)

We have analysed here the following aspects of education of rural and urban poor (1) education of self and attendant difficulties, (2) education of the family members, viz. respondents' parents and children, (3) status of educated persons, (4) women's education, (5) help given by educated children, and (6) teacher's prejudices.

#### Educational Background of the Head of the Household

The majority of the heads of the households are illiterate (65.2 per cent) and/or bare literate (19.3 per cent). Those who have attained education upto primary and middle standard account for 5.0 per cent only. One out of every ten respondents has education upto high school level. Those having education upto intermediate level and vocational-training are only 0.5 and 0.3 per cent, respectively. There is not a single head of the household having education upto graduate level and above.

What is true of sample as a whole is also true of the urban-rural sample separately. The majority of them both are illiterate (80.7 per cent rural and 56.0 per cent urban). Among the literates, the urban poor outnumber the rural poor (27.6 vs 5.3 per cent). For instance, there are 6.0 per cent urban poor as against 2.0 per cent rural poor with primary level education. But the proportion of rural poor having high school education is larger than that of the urban poor.

Table 9 1

Education of the head of the household, in per cent

Education	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Illiterate	80.7	56.0	65.2
Bare literate	5.3	27.6	19.3
Primary	2.0	6.0	4.5
Middle	0.0	0.8	0.5
High school	12.0	8.4	9.7
Intermediate	0.0	0.8	0.5
Vocational training	0.0	0.4	0.3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

(12.0 vs 8.4 per cent) None in rural areas has education above high school, whereas in urban areas, a small percentage is educated upto intermediate as also have vocational training

These discrete educational categories have been merged together into two broad categories (i) literate, bare literate, primary and middle school labelled 'low' and (ii) high school and above labelled 'high' Table 9 2 compresses the relevant data on the level of education attained by the respondents. It is evident that 89.5 per cent of the poor have the low level of education and 10.5 per cent high education.

When the two groups — rural and urban — are compared, it is found that more urban than rural poor have the low level of education (90.4 vs 88.0 per cent) and more rural than urban have high level of education (12.0 vs 9.6 per cent). This, then, shows that the poor are very poorly educated, whether rural or urban.

Table 9 2

Level of education of the head of the household,  
in per cent

Level of Education	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Low	88 0*	90 4*	89 5
High	12 0	9 6	10 5
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

\* Non-significant at 05 level

When we see the relationship between the contextual background of the poor and their level of education, it is observed that there is no significant and marked distinction between the rural and urban poor in respect of the level of education. The hypothesis that the urban poor are more educated than the rural poor is not sustained.

We further elicited information about reasons for not getting proper education. The poor have advanced five reasons of their poor education which, in order of importance, are (1) poor economic condition, (2) lone man to share the familial responsibility, (3) lack of interest in schooling, (4) no school in or near the locality, and (5) separation from parents due to death, desertion, or divorce (see Table 9 3).

Interestingly, similar pattern of causes for discontinuing the education is reflected from the responses of rural and urban poor. For instance, both the groups point out that economic condition (80 8 vs. 58 0 per cent), followed by lone

Table 9 3

Reasons for not getting further education, in per cent

Reasons	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Poor economic condition	58.0	80.8	72.2
No one man to take care of family	27.3	10.8	17.0
Lack of interest	10.7	6.4	8.0
No school near the residence	4.0	0.4	1.8
Death, divorce, desertion of parents	0.0	1.6	1.0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

man to carry the burden of the family (1) 8 vs 27.3 per cent), and lack of interest in studies came in the way of further education. This, then, shows that most significant reasons for not getting further education are economic, onus of the family, and lack of interest in studies.

#### Education of Wives of the Head of the Household

We next enquired about the education of wives of the head of the household. Table 9.4 reveals that 84.0 per cent wives of the poor are illiterate, while 10.0 per cent are bare literate. A small percentage of wives are educated upto primary and middle school (3.5 and 2.5 per cent, respectively).

There is almost close proximity between the level of education of the wives of the rural and urban poor almost at all levels of education. For instance, the majority of wives of both the poor groups are illiterate (each 84.0 per cent), followed by bare literate (9.4 per cent rural and 10.4 per

Table 9 4

Education of the wives of the head of the household,  
in per cent

Level of Education of Wives	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Illiterate	84.0	84.0	84.0
Barely literate	9.4	10.4	10.0
Primary	3.3	3.6	3.5
Middle	3.3	2.0	2.5
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

ent urban), and having education upto primary level and above  
6.6 per cent rural and 5.6 per cent urban)

The data, then, suggests that the rate of illiteracy  
among the wives of the poor is very high. Only a small  
proportion of them is bare literate or educated upto primary  
standard.

A comparison of the educational background of husbands  
and their wives (see Tables 9.1 and 9.4) shows that the latter  
are relatively more illiterate than that of the former. This  
situation corresponds to the national pattern of literacy  
where women lag behind the men in the realm of education.

#### Education of the Parents of the Head of the Household

Education of the parents is highly significant in deter-  
mining one's status in India (Kuppuswamy, 1962). Furthermore,  
the parents' education shapes the values, aspirations, motiva-  
tions and achievement orientations of the sons. Table 9.5

Table 9 5

Education of parents of the head of the household,  
in per cent

Level of Education	Father			Mother		
	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Illiterate	86.6	77.6	81.0	92.0	88.4	89.7
Bare literate	9.4	10.0	9.8	5.3	8.0	7.0
Primary	2.6	8.4	6.2	2.0	2.4	2.3
Middle	0.0	2.8	1.8	0.7	1.2	1.0
High school	1.4	1.2	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)	(150)	(250)	(400)

compresses information regarding the educational level of the parents of the head of the household. The majority of the respondents' fathers are/were illiterate (81.0 per cent) or bare literate (9.8 per cent). The rest of others are educated but that, too, upto primary and middle standard (6.2 and 1.8 per cent, respectively). Only a small percentage of them, say 1.2 per cent, has got education upto high school.

More rural than urban fathers of the respondents are illiterate (86.6 vs. 77.6 per cent). The proportion of those who are bare literate is almost identical in both the groups (9.4 per cent rural, 10.4 per cent urban). More urban than rural fathers of the respondents have education upto primary (8.4 vs. 2.6 per cent) and middle levels (2.8 vs. zero per cent). There is almost similarity between the level of education of fathers of the respondents of both the groups.

Table 9 5

Education of parents of the head of the household,  
in per cent

Level of Education	Father			Mother		
	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Illiterate	86.6	77.6	81.0	92.0	88.4	89.7
Bare literate	9.4	10.0	9.8	5.3	8.0	7.0
Primary	2.6	8.4	6.2	2.0	2.4	2.3
Middle	0.0	2.8	1.8	0.7	1.2	1.0
High school	1.4	1.2	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)	(150)	(250)	(400)

compresses information regarding the educational level of the parents of the head of the household. The majority of the respondents' fathers are/were illiterate (81.0 per cent) or bare literate (9.8 per cent). The rest of others are educated but that, too, upto primary and middle standard (6.2 and 1.8 per cent, respectively). Only a small percentage of them, say 1.2 per cent, has got education upto high school.

More rural than urban fathers of the respondents are illiterate (86.6 vs 77.6 per cent). The proportion of those who are bare literate is almost identical in both the groups (9.4 per cent rural, 10.4 per cent urban). More urban than rural fathers of the respondents have education upto primary (8.4 vs. 2.6 per cent) and middle levels (2.8 vs zero per cent). There is almost similarity between the level of education of fathers of the respondents of both the groups.

who have high school education (14 per cent rural and 12 per cent urban)

This, then, shows that the majority of the fathers or the respondents are either illiterate or bare literate. However, the proportion of the educated fathers or the urban respondents is greater than those of their rural counterparts.

Coming to the level of education of respondents' mothers. The data in Table 9.5 suggests that 89.7 per cent respondents' mothers are illiterate and or 7.0 per cent bare literate. The mothers educated upto primary level and middle level constitute 2.3 and 1.0 per cent, respectively.

A large proportion of mothers of the rural than urban poor are illiterate (92.0 vs 88.4 per cent), while a large proportion of mothers of urban than rural poor are bare literate (8.0 vs 5.3 per cent). As we proceed further in the level of the education, it is found that mothers of the urban poor outpace the mothers of the rural poor, the ratio being 3.6:2.7 per cent at primary and middle standard.

It may, then, be concluded that the rate of literacy is somewhat higher among urban than rural poor's mothers, although the majority of them both are illiterate or bare literate.

The data in Table 9.6 reveals that sons are relatively more educated than their fathers irrespective of the contextual background. The majority of the sons from both rural and urban areas are relatively more educated than their fathers (19.3 vs. 13.4 per cent rural and 44.0 vs. 22.4 per cent urban). However, the sons in urban areas outnumber the sons in the rural areas in terms of higher education. There are 50.0 per

Table 9 b

Comparison of educational mobility of sons and their fathers, in per cent

Level of Education of Sons	Level of Education of Fathers									
	Rural Sons' Fathers					Urban Sons' Fathers				
	Cases					Cases				
	Illiterate	Bare Literate	Primary	Middle	High School	Illiterate	Bare Literate	Primary	Middle	High School
Illiterate	89.3	9.1	0.8	0.0	0.8	96.4	2.1	0.0	1.5	0.0
Bare literate	62.5	37.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	73.9	1.5	21.7	0.0	2.9
Primary	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0	0.0	33.3	26.7	0.0
Middle school	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	50.0
High school	77.8	0.0	16.7	0.0	5.5	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Intermediate	0.0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0*	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
Vocational training	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Number of cases	(130)	(14)	(4)	(0)	(2)	(150)	(194)	(25)	(7)	(3)
										(250)

\* Significant at .05 level

cent sons with education upto intermediate level and cent-per-cent sons with vocational training, while their fathers had no higher education or vocational training. In rural areas neither sons nor the fathers have had higher education and vocational training.

This, then, shows that sons are more mobile in terms of education and the urban sons outpace the rural sons in terms of educational mobility. The distinction between education of sons and fathers is marked and significant (0.05 level).

#### Education of the Offspring of the Head of the Household

We tried to know the education of the sons and daughters of the head of the household. In addition, we collected information regarding education of other schoolgoing children in the family. Table 9.7 summarizes the relevant information. It is evident from the table that there are 53.7 per cent respondents' families where none is attending school. And, here, there is almost complete similarity between the rural and urban poor (54.0 vs. 53.6 per cent). Among the poor's families where there are school-going children, more sons than daughters are going to schools (32.0 vs. 33.3 per cent). The rural poor outnumber the urban poor in sending their sons to school (41.3 vs. 26.4 per cent) and the urban poor exceed rural poor in sending daughters to school (5.2 vs. zero per cent). There is small proportion of the poor in whose families both sons and daughters are being sent to school (6.3 per cent). Here, again, the urban poor outpace the rural

Table 9 7

School-going children in the poor's families, in per cent

School-going Children	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Sons	41 3	26 4	32 0
Daughters	0 0	5 2	3 3
Sons and daughters both	2 0	8 8	6 3
Brother	1 4	4 0	3 0
Relatives	1 3	2 0	1 7
None	54 0	53 6	53 7
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

poor (8 8 vs 2 2 per cent) More urban than rural poor send their brothers to school (4.0 vs 1 4 per cent) In few cases, the poor send their relatives' wards to school

It transpires, then, that the education of the daughters is relatively more neglected than the education of sons However, it is more true of urban than rural poor

#### Kind of Courses Preferred by the Offspring of the Poor

The level of schooling assumes significant meaning only when linked with the kind of education Table 9 8 suggests that in the majority of poor's families (93 3 per cent) no school-going child has reached at a level where decisions are made about a specific kind of education (96 7 per cent rural and 91 2 per cent urban). Of those who have reached that stage, science and liberal arts are more popular among urban than among rural poor (3.6 vs. zero per cent, and 3.2 vs 1 3

Table 9 8

Kind of education preferred by the offsprings of the poor,  
in per cent

Kind of Education Preferred	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Science	0 6	3 6	2 3
Liberal arts	1 3	3 2	2 5
Commerce	1 3	1 6	1 4
Vocational training	0 7	0 4	0 5
No choice	96 7	91 2	93 3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

per cent, respectively) Commerce and vocational education seem to be almost equally popular with them (1 3 per cent rural, 1 6 per cent urban)

#### Purposes Behind Educating the Offsprings

Table 9 9 presents the poor's perception of the purposes with which they send their children for schooling. Nearly half of the sample population (49 4 per cent) do not send their children to schools, but those who send their children for schooling have interesting things to say. The majority of the poor feel that the education will help their wards to get a job (47 3 per cent), and this is more strongly felt by the rural than the urban poor (57.3 vs 41 2 per cent). A small percentage, say 3.3 per cent, anticipate that the education will enable their children to raise their socio-economic status. Here, again, the rural poor outnumber the urban poor (4 0 vs 2 8 per cent).

Table 9 9

The poor's perception of purposes in sending their children to school, in per cent

Purposes	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 To get a job	57 3	41 2	47 3
2 To raise socio-economic status	4 0	2 8	3 3
3 Do not send children for schooling	38 7	56 0	49 4
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

To sum up more urban than rural poor do not send their children to schools. The main motive behind educating their children is to get a job and raise the socio-economic status.

#### Difficulties Experienced by the Poor in Educating Their Offsprings

As Table 9 10 shows, the majority of the poor confront economic hardships, for, the expenses of education are beyond their means (70 0 per cent). Of interest, there is almost complete similarity between responses of the rural and urban poor (70 7 vs 69 6 per cent). Another difficulty experienced by the poor is that their children lack interest in studies (8 6 per cent rural, 9 8 per cent urban). Finally, the poor feel that there is lack of educational institutions to send their children for education (20.0 per cent rural, 1 2 per cent urban).

Table 9 10

Difficulties in educating the children, in per cent

Difficulties Experienced	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Financial hardships	70 7	69 6	70 0
Lack of educational institutions	20 0	1 2	8 3
Lack of interest in studies	8 6	9 6	9 3
No school-going child	0 7	19 6	12 4
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

This, then, shows that the poor experience three difficulties in educating their children at the economic level, they had financial handicaps, at the personality level, they find their children lacking interest in studies, and at the societal level, they visualize absence of educational institutions

#### The Highest Level of Education Attained by Children of Poor

Three-fifths of the poor's sons, and nine-tenth of the daughters have no education. Among those who are educated, the sons of both the poor groups — rural and urban outpace the daughters (44.6 vs. 2.7 per cent rural and 37.2 vs. 14.4 per cent urban). Note that not only more sons than daughters are educated but also that they are better educated.

Interestingly, more rural than urban poor are sending their sons to schools as well as giving them higher education. As against this, more urban than rural poor send their daughters to school (14.4 vs. 2.7 per cent).

Table 9 11

The highest level of education attained by the children  
of the poor, in per cent

Level of Education Acquired	Sons			Daughters		
	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Low Literate Primary	26 0	30 8	29 0	2 7	13 6	9 5
Medium Middle High school Intermediate	17 3	5 6	10 0	0.0	0 8	0 5
High Graduation- and-above	1 3	0 8	1 0	0.0	0 0	0 0
Not-going to school	55 4	62 8	60 0	97 3	85 6	90 0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)	(150)	(250)	(400)

This, then, shows that, by and large, the poor neglect the education of their daughters as compared to their sons. However, the urban poor try to educate their daughters more than the rural poor.

#### Poor's Attitude Towards Women's Higher Education

The respondents were asked, 'Are you in favour of giving higher education to women?' Their responses (see Table 9 12) reveal that the majority of the poor do not favour higher education for women (97.3 per cent rural, 89.6 per cent urban).

Table 9 12

The poor's attitude towards women's higher education,  
in, per cent

Attitude towards Higher Education for Women	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Women should get higher education	2.7	10.4	7.5
Should not get higher education	97.3	89.6	92.5
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

Among those who favour higher education for women, the urban poor outweigh the rural poor (10.4 vs 2.7 per cent.)

We, thus, see that the poor, by and large, do not favour higher education to the women. The urban poor, however, seem somewhat more positively inclined.

#### Employment Status of the Educated Persons in the Family

Insofar as the employment status of the educated members of the poor's family is concerned, the majority of them are unemployed (59.3 per cent). The severity of educated unemployment is experienced more by the rural than by the urban poor (96.0 vs 37.2 per cent). Barely 15.5 per cent educated members are able to secure employment, and that, too, is exclusive an urban feature. However, one-fourth of the total sample population had no educated member in their family. In other words, the condition of the educated rural poor is worst than that of their urban counterpart.

Table 9 13

The employment status of the educated members in the  
poor's family, in per cent

Employment Status	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Unemployed	96 0	37 2	59 3
Employed	0 0	24 8	15 5
No educated member	4 0	38 0	24 2
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

#### Attitude of the Educated Members Towards the Family

It is generally said that the educated and/or well placed persons from amongst the poor strata start maintaining distance from their own people. In order to test the validity of such an assumption, the information was collected on whether the educated (whether employed or unemployed) members of the poor's families help economically? It is evident that 63 0 per cent educated members do not support their families. Only 37 0 per cent support. Somewhat more rural than urban educated persons of the poor's family shirk from the economic obligations of their families (64 7 vs 62 0 per cent). Although somewhat more urban than rural poor help the families, the general pattern is the same in both the cases. Thus, the findings support our formulated assumption.

### Teachers' Prejudices

It is generally talked about that the teachers are indifferent to the pupils coming from the poor families. In order to ascertain this, we asked "Do the teachers pay due attention to your child in the school?" There are 43.3 per cent poor whose children go to school. Out of them, 22.0 per cent feel that teachers pay sufficient attention towards their wards. As against this, 21.3 per cent nurture a negative feeling. More urban than rural poor feel that their children are neglected by the teachers (23.6 vs. 17.4 per cent).

### Monthly Expenditure on Education

There is almost similarity between the rural and urban poor as regards the pattern of expenditure on education. Over 80.0 per cent poor from both the groups do not have any expenditure on education as none in their family goes to school. The average monthly expenditure on education is Rs. 1.1 for rural, Rs. 1.4 for urban poor, and Rs. 1.3 for the poor on the whole.

Table 9.14

The poor's monthly expenditure on education, in per cent

Monthly Expenditure on Education	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
No expense	82.0	80.8	81.2
Rs. 10-and-less	16.0	15.2	15.5
Rs. 10-20	2.0	2.8	2.5
Rs. 20-and-above	0.0	1.2	0.8
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)
Average	Rs. 1.1	Rs. 1.4	Rs. 1.3

### Case Study 9

Rama Nand, aged 51 years, belonging to Kanar caste is from Maksudabad village. He is an illiterate. The economic conditions of his family is poor since his father's time. He could not get education as he had to earn to supplement family income since his early childhood. He says he is eager to send his children to school, but lacks financial resources. He, like his father, needs that his children earn

### Case Study 10

Ganga, aged 43 years, belonging to Rajput caste hails from Govind Nagar Kachchi Basti. He is a thela puller in grain mandi (market). His monthly income ranges from Rs 160 to 200 a month. He has to support his family of eight members. He has three children of school-going age, but they had to remain out of schools. He too feels the lack of money.

In what has gone before, we have analysed the educational background of the poor's family. The findings reveal that the majority of the poor are illiterate or bare literate. However, more urban than rural poor are literate. The wives of the poor are even more illiterate.

A comparison of the poor's and their fathers' education revealed that the latter are/were illiterate than the former. Respondents' mothers are/were more illiterate as compared to their fathers. However, the fathers and mothers of the urban poor are/were somewhat more literate than that of their rural counterparts.

In most of the poor's families, the majority of their children do not go to school, and on this score, the situation is almost identical in both rural and urban areas. The level of education attained by the sons and daughters is the lowest, the latter lag much behind the former. In majority of the cases, the children are not educated upto the level wherefrom begins the specialization of courses. In small cases, the science and liberal art are more popular with the urban poor children and liberal art and commerce with the rural poor children.

The main difficulties before the poor in educating the children are financial hardships, lack of interest of children in studies, and absence of educational institutions.

The main purposes behind educating the children are to help them get a job and raise their socio-economic status.

Most of the educated members in the poor's family, are unemployed, and it is more true of rural than urban poor.

The poor do not favour the higher education for women. However, more urban than rural poor want women to get higher education.

The educated and employed members of the poor's family maintain distance from their families, at least in sharing their earning with their family.

Over one-fourth of the poor nurture the feeling that the teachers do not pay proper attention to their sons and daughters. Here urban poor are more dissatisfied than the rural poor.

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PART V

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SOCIO-CULTURAL COMPONENT

DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

VALUES, INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES

POLITICS AND POWER

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## CHAPTER TEN

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### DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

The population and poverty are said to interact in several ways. First, there is high mortality among the poor which includes life-expectancy, probability of bereavement, and infant and child mortality. Secondly, the population growth, increasing population pressure on land, and rapid rural-urban migration have adverse effects on employment and income growth, and hence on poverty. Thirdly, overconsumption by the growing population causes depletion and exhaustion of natural resources, which, in turn, puts strain on the higher level of living. Fourthly, there is more subtle relationship between population and poverty: the effects on poverty of changing family structures, and the role of children as component in poverty life-styles. Fifthly, inability to control fertility, whether upward or downward is again a relevant characteristic of poverty, for, it shows their lack of access to contraception. Sixthly, there exists a relationship between fertility and poverty life-style. Finally, insofar as the poor live by labour, the reproducing of labour by them becomes a necessity, and hence there is high fertility and, thus, large family size. Because of these and various other implications, this chapter attempts to analyse the demographic features of the poor's family separately. Here our focus is on two kinds of demographic data - (1) information about

persons in terms of age, caste, religion, and familial background, and (ii) information about vital events, such as marriage, divorce, and migration.

## I INFORMATION ABOUT PERSONS

### Age

Age, although a physiological variable, has great social and cultural significance. The cycle of growth from infancy to adulthood creates discontinuities in the life-cycle — a fact of nature which is inescapable (Parsons, 1942 604-616, Vinacke and Wilson, 1964 241-248, Benedict, 1938 161-168). While age itself is largely beyond the individual's or society's determination, the attention paid to it and the meaning attached with it vary considerably from society to society and among various parts of a society (Eisenstadt, 1964). "Age-graded cultures", says Benedict, "characteristically demand different behaviour of the individual at different times of his life and persons of a like age-grade are grouped into society whose activities are all oriented towards the behaviour desired at that age. Individuals 'graduate' publicly and with honour from one of these groups to another" (Benedict, 1938, 161-168). The information regarding age composition of the poor is presented in Table 10.1.

The table indicates that the majority of the head of the households belong to the age-group 30-40, and 40-50 years (38.0 per cent and 33.8 per cent, respectively) and those belonging to the age-group 20-30 years are barely 15.8 per cent and of 50 years-and-above 12.4 per cent. This, then,

Table 10 1

Age of the head of the households, in per cent

Age-group	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
20-30 years	3 3	23 2	15 8
30-40 years	37 0	39 2	38 0
40-50 years	47 3	25 6	33.8
50 years-and-above	12 4	12 0	12.4
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)
Mean age	41 9 years	37 6 years	39 3 years

shows that the majority of the head of the households are of age-group 30-50 years. Mean age of the poor is 39 3 years

The majority of the head of the households in rural areas belong to the age-group of 40-50 years (47 3 vs 25.6 per cent) and in urban areas to the age-group of 30-40 years (39 7 vs. 37.0 per cent). Those of the age-group 20-30 years are more in urban than in rural areas (23.2 vs. 3 3 per cent) This then, reflects that the head of the household in urban sample consists mainly of age-group 20-40 years (62.4 per cent) and in rural sample of age-group 30-50 years (73.3 per cent)

The mean age of the rural poor is 41.9 years and the urban poor is 37.6 years.

#### Caste

Although caste and all the discriminations flowing from it stand abolished by the Constitution of India, it has managed to survive It is still of pervasive importance,

defines "the very structure of social survival", and is "the fundamental rhythm of life itself" Caste is overwhelmingly Hindu in operation but "Muslims, Christians, Jews have all, in varying degrees succumbed to its influence" (Segal, 1971 35-120). Caste continues to determine the social position and life opportunities of individuals in India There are certain metaphysical principles such as Samsara (rebirth), Karma (transmigration), Moksha (salvation), and Dharma (duty) held by almost all Hindus and it is these that together govern caste.<sup>1</sup> The data on the caste of respondents is presented in Table 10 2

It transpires from the table that the majority of the poor belong to backward caste (39 0 per cent) and Scheduled Caste (29 8 per cent) By contrast, the percentage of the "twice-born" caste is smaller They together constitute only 15 4 per cent The percentage of intermediary castes (9 8 per cent) is relatively higher than the Brahmins, Kshatriya, and Vaishya separately and of non-caste (Muslims) equal to Brahmin and Kshatriya. This, then, shows that the majority of the poor belong to the low caste and non-caste, the proportion of the higher caste is relatively lower (84.5 vs. 15.5 per cent).

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<sup>1</sup>The characteristics of caste, as summed up by G S Ghurye, are (1) segmental division of society, (2) hierarchy; (3) restriction on feeling and social intercourse; (4) civil and religious disabilities and privileges of the different sections, (5) lack of unrestricted choice of occupation, and (6) restrictions on marriage (Ghurye, 1961 30-41, see also Atal, 1968)

Table 10 2

Caste composition of the poor, in per cent

Caste	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Brahmin	8 7	4 4	6 0
Kshatriya	7 3	5 2	6.0
Vaishya	5 3	2 4	3 4
Intermediary caste	20 7	3 2	9 8
Scheduled-caste	7 3	43 2	29 8
Backward caste	48 7	33 2	39 0
Non-caste	2 0	8 4	6 0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

While most represented caste among the urban poor is that of Scheduled Caste (43 2 per cent), followed by backward caste (33 2 per cent), most represented caste among the rural poor is that of backward caste (48 7 per cent), followed by intermediary caste. The percentage of 'twice-born' castes and intermediary caste are larger in rural than in urban areas (21 3 vs 11 8 per cent, and 20.7 vs 3.2 per cent, respectively). The proportion of non-caste is higher in urban (8 4 per cent) than in rural areas (2 0 per cent).

This, then, shows that the majority of the poor belong to backward castes,<sup>2</sup> scheduled castes,<sup>3</sup> intermediary

<sup>2</sup>Backward caste includes Kewat, Kahar, Yadav, Khatik, Kumhar, Kurmi, Pal, Saini, Tamoli, and Barber.

<sup>3</sup>Scheduled Caste includes Raidas, Lodhi, Sankhwar, Naik, Jaiswara, Mehtar, Dhanuk, Hela, Musawar, Murai, and Dhobi

caste,<sup>4</sup> and non-caste<sup>5</sup> as compared to the high caste irrespective of the rural-urban background.

## Religion

Religion exists in every society. From societal viewpoint, the ultimate group values are tied to the supposed reality of religion, and, from the individual standpoint religion furnishes definite rules of conduct, which, in turn, constitute an element of social organization. Religion also provides an individual with a means to make for his frustrations, fears, and insecurity resulting from his failure in this world. Table 10.3 sets out the distribution of the sample population according to religion and rural-urban background.

It will be observed from the table that there are two religious groups in our sample: Hindu and Islam, the former being in majority than the latter (94.0 vs. 6.0 per cent). What is true of the sample as a whole is also true of rural and urban sample separately. The percentage of Hindus is much higher than that of Islam in both rural and urban areas (98.0 vs. 2.0 and 91.6 vs. 8.4 per cent, respectively). Whereas Hindus are relatively more in rural areas, Muslims are more in urban areas (8.4 vs. 2.0 per cent).

<sup>4</sup>Intermediary caste includes Verma, Srivastava, and Khatri.

<sup>5</sup>Non-caste refers to Muslims where there is no caste system.

Table 10 3

Religious background of the poor, in per cent

Religion	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Hindu	98 0	91,6	94 0
Islam	2 0	8 4	6 0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

### The Nature and the Size of the Family

The joint undivided family is commonly accepted as a normal pattern of family in India (Prabhu, 1963; Kapadia, 1968, Davis, 1942 93-100). However, under the impact of modern forces of social change, the traditional base of the institution is gradually getting eroded <sup>6</sup> In order to know the nature of

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<sup>6</sup>Of late sociologists have started raising the question Is joint family breaking down? There are two main answers to this questions one, some sociologists maintain that joint families never change except by eternal recurrence of the nuclear-to-joint, and joint-to-nuclear cycle of growth and decline (Desai, 1955 85-146, Kapadia, 1969 68-99, Ovensstein, 1961 341-350, Cohn, 1961 1051-1055, Madan, 1962 88-89, Shah, 1964 1-36, Kolenda, 1968, Gould, 1968 413-421). Two, some scholars hold that joint family has been changing into nuclear families (Desai, 1964, Gore, 1968, Kapadia, 1969, Karve, 1963, 1965, Madan, 1965, Mayer, 1960, Ovans, 1965, Ross, 1965). The latter group of scholars are guided by the view that the nuclear family is the characteristic unit of industrial society (Worsley et al, 1970 137, Burgess and Locke, 1945 26-27; Davis, 1937 289-309, Goode, 1963, Nimkoff, 1965, Moore and Feldman, 1960). There is, however, one common ground between the two differing views: all agree that joint families always change into nuclear families irrespective of whether change in families takes place in cyclic or linear fashion

families the poor live in, we collected data on two distinct, yet intimately related, aspects of the family — the nature and the size, and the relevant data is presented in Table 10.4.

Let us first scan the data pertaining to the nature of the poor's family. The majority of the poor belong to joint families (64.2 per cent). As against this, only 35.8 per cent poor hail from nuclear families. More rural than urban poor come from the joint families (96.0 vs. 45.2 per cent), whereas more urban than rural belong to the nuclear families (54.8 vs. 4.0 per cent).

In summary, then, the joint families are more prevalent among the rural poor and nuclear families among the urban poor. The difference is marked and significant (.05 level). It supports the hypothesis that the nuclear family is more prevalent among the urban than among the rural areas.

The term 'joint' and 'nuclear' may hide the reality, if the size of the families are not known. For analytical purposes, we classified the families into three broad sizes: (i) families having 5 members and less called 'small', (ii) families having 6 to 7 members called 'medium', and (iii) families having 8-and-more members called 'large'. Another look at Table 10.4 from the viewpoint of the size of the families reveals that two-fifths of the poor's families are of large size, and those of nearly three-tenths of medium size. As against this, over three-tenths poor's families are of small size.

Table 10.4

The nature and the size of the families of the poor,  
in per cent

Families of the Poor	Rural Poor (N=150)	Urban Poor (N=250)	Rural + Urban Poor (N=400)
<u>Nature of the family</u>			
Nuclear	4 0	54 8*	35 8
Joint	96 0*	45 2	64 2
<u>Size of the family</u>			
Small (2-5)	10 0	51 2*	35.7
Medium (5-7)	30 0	27 2	28.3
Large (7-and-above)	60 0*	21.6	36 0

\*Significant at 05 level

A comparison of the family size of the rural and urban poor shows that a large proportion of large size families (60.0 per cent) and medium size families (30 0 per cent) are found in the rural areas and a large proportion of small (51 2 per cent) and medium size (27.2 per cent) families in urban areas. It transpires, then, that large size families are the characteristics of the sample in general. However, large families are in large number in rural areas and small size families in urban areas.

How deep is the felt-need of the rural poor for a large family can be summed up in informant's own few words

"Larka hi to burhaye ka sahara hai aur bhagwan  
ki den hai"

(the son is the only support in the oldhood and  
he is the gift of God)

However, the urban poor feels differently, our one informant said

"Aaj kal apne rahane-khane ka to thikana nahi hai, duniyabhar ka parivar kaise sambhalenge"

(There is no stake for our own living and food, how can we sustain a big family)

The relationship between some correlates — occupation, income, caste, and education — and the family size may be seen from Table 10 5

The majority of the rural poor irrespective of their occupations, belong to the large-and-medium-size families. By contrast, the urban poor, by and large, come from small size families. The main occupation of the rural poor is agricultural wage labour and of urban poor non-agricultural wage-labour. The relationship between the occupation and the size of the family is marked and significant ( 05 level)

What is true of occupations is also true of income. The rural poor from all income brackets have large size family. On the other hand, the urban poor from all income categories belong to small size family. The distinction between the family size of the rural poor is marked and significant and there seems to be positive association with income and family-size.

A close look at the relationship between education and the family-size reveals that low educated poor in rural areas have large families, while in urban areas small families. This shows that education of the poor has no significance in determining the size of their families.

Table 10 5

Socio-cultural characteristics and the size of the family or the poor, in per cent

Socio-cultural Characteristics	Size or the Family							Cases
	Rural Poor			Urban Poor				
	Small (2-5)	Medium (5-7)	Large (7-and- above)	Small (2-5)	Medium (5-7)	Large (7-and- above)		
<b>Occupation*</b>								
Cultivator and agriculture wage earner	5.5	23.8	70.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	(126)	(0)
Non-agriculture wage earner	34.8	65.2	0.0	46.2	29.8	24.0	(23)	(171)
Self-employed/petty businessmen	0.0	0.0	100.0	50.0	30.0	20.0	(1)	(30)
Salary earner	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	(0)	(1)
Not gainfully occupied	0.0	0.0	0.0	70.8	14.6	14.6	(0)	(48)
Number of cases							(150)	(250)
<b>Income*</b>								
Rs. 200-and-less	18.6	34.3	47.1	64.6	17.7	17.7	(70)	(34)
Rs. 200-300	2.7	25.3	72.0	48.6	32.8	18.6	(75)	(140)
Rs. 300-500-and-above	0.0	40.0	60.0	50.0	21.0	29.0	(5)	(76)
Number of cases							(150)	(150)
<b>Education**</b>								
Low	11.4	34.4	54.2	52.2	26.6	21.2	(131)	(226)
High	0.0	0.0	100.0	41.7	33.3	25.0	(19)	(24)
Number of cases							(150)	(250)
<b>Caste*</b>								
High	7.9	19.0	73.1	55.3	36.8	7.9	(12)	(7)
Low	11.9	35.7	52.4	50.3	26.7	23.0	(20)	(43)
Number of cases							(32)	(50)

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\*Significant at .05 level

\*\*Non-significant at .05 level.

Irrespective of the caste the poor belong to, the rural poor have large and urban poor small families. However, the high caste poor have large families in rural than urban areas. There is marked and significant distinction between the pattern of rural and urban families (0.05 level).

#### Poor's Preference for Family

Table 10.6 compresses the data regarding poor's preference for the family. It is evident that the majority of the poor (63.7 per cent) have shown their preference for the joint family, only 36.3 per cent prefer nuclear family. More rural than urban poor have preferred joint families (96.0 vs 44.4 per cent).

This, then, reflects that nuclear families are preferred by the urban poor and joint families by the rural poor. It transpires that traditional pattern of joint families still continues in rural areas. Also, the constraint of village life demands co-operative effort. Urban spatial problems may not permit the poor to live jointly, hence they prefer nuclear families.

Table 10.6

The type of family preferred by the poor, in per cent

Family Preferred	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Nuclear	4.0	55.6	36.3
Joint	96.0	44.4	63.7
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

A glimpse of the reasons for the preference of the joint family may be had from Table 10.7. Over two-fifths of the poor feel that the joint family provides economic support to its members (42.7 per cent), whereas one-fifth of them view that it guarantees protection during calamity. To a small percentage of poor, the joint family is a good place to live in (8.5 per cent).

It, then, transpires that the majority of the poor (71.8 per cent) possess a positive attitude towards joint family. As against this, 28.3 per cent poor hold a negative view as they say the head in the joint families exploits the family members.

A comparative look at the table shows that the rural poor have relatively more positive orientation towards the joint family than those of the urban poor (97.3 vs. 55.4 per cent). Although both the groups of poor have positive attitude towards joint family, the rural poor outweigh the urban poor.

Table 10.7,

The poor's attitude towards the joint family, in per cent

Attitude towards the Joint Family	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1. Good place to live	18.7	2.4	8.5
2. Protection during calamity	31.9	13.6	20.5
3. Provides economic-support	46.7	40.4	42.7
4. Exploitation by the head of the household	2.7	44.6	28.3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

## II INFORMATION ABOUT VITAL EVENTS

### Marital Status

As Table 10 8 shows as many as 99 0 per cent of the poor are married. Most of them seem to be leading a continuous normal life as only 3 7 per cent of them are widower and 0.3 per cent are divorced.

What is true of the sample as a whole is also true of the rural-urban samples separately. In both the samples, a large majority of the poor are married, however, a relatively higher percentage of rural than urban poor are married (100 0 vs 98 4 per cent). There is a larger percentage of widower among the urban than among the rural poor (4 4 vs 2.7 per cent). The incidence of remaining unmarried (1.6 per cent) as well as of divorce (0 4 per cent) is exclusively urban characteristics.

In summary, then, the divorce is purely an urban phenomenon, it has not affected the rural poor's families. Finally, the mortality among the married women seem to be less in rural than urban areas although enough data is not available to support this assertion. Most of the marriages end not in divorce, but with the death of one or the other partner. It is perhaps in the mortality of married women and in the incidence of divorce that poverty seems to be reflected more in urban than in rural areas. The case of slightly more men remaining unmarried in urban areas seems to be the result of abject poverty. Death plagues both rural and urban married life. Although it is not as common as death, divorce is on

Table 10 8

Marital status of the poor, in per cent

Marital Status	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Married	97 3	93 6	95.0
Widower	2 7	4 4	3.7
Divorced	0 0	0 4	0 3
Unmarried	0 0	1 6	1 0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

way to join the death to disrupt the marital life, particularly of urban poor. Divorce poses new sets of expectations and problem, it inevitably leaves scars (Carter and Glick, 1970, Goode, 1956).

#### Number of Wives the Poor Have

Tradition has it that a Hindu male can marry second and more times, if he has no male issue from his first wife, for, the son alone can ensure the liberation of his parents' souls from the clutches of the god of death (Yamaraj) and their admission to heaven. In fact, one of the purpose of the marriage is to have 'praja' (son). Even beyond religious and cultural tradition, the people may have more than one wife. Islam permits its followers to have four wives at a time. We tried to ascertain the number of wives the poor have.

The majority of the poor have only one wife (91.0 per cent). However, a small percentage do have two (7.7 per cent) and three wives (0.3 per cent).

Table 10 9

Number of wives poor have, in per cent

Number of Wives	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
One	94 0	89 2	91 0
Two	6.0	8 8	7 7
Three	0 0	0.4	0.3
Unmarried	0 0	1 6	1 0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

More rural than urban poor have one wife (94 0 vs 89 2 per cent) Conversely, more urban than rural poor have two (8 8 vs. 6.0 per cent) and three wives (0 4 vs. nil per cent)

It is obvious that the general pattern of marriage is monogamy But, if circumstances so demand, the poor have more than one wife Whatever be the religio-cultural compulsions, the practice of having more than one wife has wide implications for the family-size, and thereby for the style-of-life

#### Age at Marriage of the Poor

Earlier studies have concluded that child marriages have long occurred on a large scale in India Hence, one would expect a very low average age at marriage, particularly among the females (Agarwala, 1962). Age at marriage is directly linked with the fertility rate in India. In other words, it is a correct measure of the size of family and one's standard of living consequently.

The data in Table 10 10 points out that most of the poor (87.5 per cent) were married when they were below 15 years. Those who were married between 15 and 18 years of age are only 11.0 per cent. Only 0.5 per cent poor were married when they attained 18 years and more.

The same picture is reflected if the data is seen rural-urban-wise. A majority from both the poor groups were married at an early age (88.0 per cent rural and 86.7 per cent urban). Those who were married between 15 and 18 years of age are more in rural than in urban areas (13.3 vs. 9.6 per cent). This is further supported by the fact that none in rural areas was married at 18 years of age, whereas 0.8 per cent were married at this age in urban areas.

It is thus evident that the poor, by and large, were married at an early age.

Table 10 10  
Poors' age at marriage, in per cent

Age at Marriage	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Below 15 years	86.7	88.0	87.5
15-18 years	13.3	9.6	11.0
Above 18 years	0.0	0.8	0.5
Unmarried	0.0	1.6	1.0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

### The Poor's Views Regarding Proper Age for Marriage of Boys and Girls

We then tried to ascertain the views of the poor towards the proper age of marriage of boys and girls. We examined this question both at normative and behavioural level. In this connection two questions were put to the poor: What should be the proper age of marriage of boys and girls, and at what age you married or plan to marry your sons and daughters. Table 10.11 presents a comparative picture of the proper age of marriage of boys and girls both at normative and behavioural level. Let us take the proper age of marriage of the boys. At the normative level, over three-fourth of the sample population says that the marriage of boys should take place in between 15 and 18 years. Only slightly over one-fifth poor feel that the proper age of marriage for boys should be less than 15 years. It is interesting to know that more urban than rural poor have favoured marriage of boys at an early age namely, below 15 years (29.6 vs 10.0 per cent), although majority of them both want the marriage of boys to take place in between 15-18 years.

As regards the age at which the respondents married or plan to marry their sons, nearly three-fourth of the poor (74.7 per cent) had no opinion to offer. Of those who responded, 14.8 per cent were married or plan to marry at the age of 15-18 years and 10.5 per cent at the age of less than 15 years.

It transpires, then, that both rural and urban poor want that marriages should take place at the age of 15-18 years.

Table 10.11

Poor's views regarding the ideal and actual age of marriage for boys and girls, in per cent

Ideal and Actual Age at Marriage	Pural Poor (N=150)	Urban Poor (N=250)	Rural + Urban Poor (N=400)
Ideal age of marriage of boys			
15 years-and-less	10 0	29 6	22 3
15-18 years	90 0	70 4	77 3
Actual age of marriage of boys			
15 years-and-less	12 0	9 6	10 5
15-18 years	16 7	13 6	14 8
No response	71 3	76 8	74 7
Ideal age of marriage of girls			
15 years-and-less	8 7	28 8	21 3
15-18 years	91 3	71 2	78 7
Actual age of marriage of girls			
15 years-and-less	32 7	13 6	20 8
15-18 years	1 3	5 6	4 0
No response	66 0	80 8	75 2

At the behavioural level, too, most of the poor married or plan to marry their sons when they are of 15 to 18 years of age (16 7 per cent rural, 13.6 per cent urban). A significant proportion of the poor married or intend to marry their sons before 15 years of age (12 0 per cent rural, 9 6 per cent urban).

There is, thus, a gap between the ideal and actual age of marriage of sons and the child marriage prevails among them both.

Coming to the proper age of marriage for girls at the normative level, slightly over three-fifth poor are of the view that the girls ought to be married when they are 15 to 18 years of age, while 21.3 per cent favour the age of marriage for girls to be 15 years and less.

More rural than urban poor have considered ideal age of marriage of girls to be 15-18 years (91.3 vs. 71.2 per cent), whereas more urban than rural poor are of the view that girls should be married below the age of 15 years (28.8 vs. 8.7 per cent). At the ideal level, the rural poor seem to outweigh the urban poor.

At the behavioural level, slightly over three-fourth of the poor had expressed their views. Two-fifth of the poor married or plan to marry when the daughters were of 15-18 years of age and one-fifth when they were just below 15 years.

More rural than urban poor married or plan to marry their daughters before the age of 15 (32.7 vs. 13.6 per cent). The reverse is the situation in case of those who married or plan to marry their daughters when they attained the age of 15-18 years (5.6 vs. 1.3 per cent).

This, then, shows that the rural poor marry their daughters at an early age, although at the ideal level they want them to be married at the age of 15-18 years. Here again, there is gap between the ideal and the actual age of marriage of the daughters of both rural and urban poor.

# Expenditure on the Marriage Held or on Would-be Marriage of Their Sons and Daughters

Next we enquired about the money the poor had spent or intend to spend on the marriage of their sons and/or daughters. Nearly 70.0 per cent poor have spent or intend to spend Rs. 2000-and-above in the marriages. Slightly over one-fourth have spent or would like to spend in-between Rs 1000-2000. The percentage of those who have spent or intend to spend Rs. 1000-and-less is relatively small (4.8 per cent).

It is interesting to note that the rural poor spend or intend to spend more on the marriage of their sons and daughters as compared to the urban poor. For example, 71.3 per cent rural poor, as compared to 68.0 per cent urban poor have spent or intend to spend Rs. 2000-and-above. Differently put, the urban poor show a tendency of spending less on the marriage of their sons and daughters than that of their rural counterparts (see Table 10.12).

Table 10.12

The money spent or intend to spend on marriages of sons and daughters, in per cent

	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Rs. 1000-and-less	2.0	6.4	4.8
Rs. 1000-2000	26.7	25.6	26.0
Rs. 2000-and-above	71.3	68.0	69.2
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

### Custom of Dowry among the Poors

Whether the custom of dowry prevails in the poor's family was also examined. The majority of the poor (83.0 per cent) give and take dowry in the marriages of their sons and daughters, only 17.0 per cent do not do so.

The custom of dowry is more prevalent among the rural than among the urban poor (86.7 vs. 80.8 per cent), although it prevails among both the poor groups. A relatively large percentage of the urban than rural poor do not give and take the dowry. However, it is difficult to say whether the urban poor are more progressive or they are under heavy financial constraints.

The reasons due to which the poor adhere to the custom of dowry may be glimpsed from Table 10.13. Slightly over three-fifths of the poor consider dowry as a means of support to the daughter. This view is held more strongly by the rural than urban poor (71.3 vs. 54.4 per cent). Nearly one out of every eight poor consider dowry a necessity. Here again, the rural poor outnumber the urban poor (17.3 vs. 10.4 per cent). One-fourth of the total sample consider dowry as a social evil. Here, the urban poor outweigh the rural poor (34.0 vs. 10.0 per cent). Almost an equal proportion from both (1.4 per cent rural and 1.2 per cent urban) had no opinion to offer.

It is obvious, then, that both rural and urban poor have positive attitude towards the dowry system. However, it is more strongly observed by the rural than the urban poor.

Table 10 13

Reasons advanced by the poor for their adherence to the custom of dowry, in per cent

Reasons for Adhering to the Custom of Dowry	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 A necessity	17 3	10 4	13 0
2 Social evil	10 0	34 0	25 0
3 Means of support	71 3	54 4	60 7
4 Cannot say	1 4	1 2	1 3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

#### Prevalence of Widow Remarriage Among the Poor's Family

Widowhood has long been recognized as an important role change. A great deal of attention has been paid to the problems of widows abroad (Clark and Anderson, 1967, Lopata, 1971 41-61, 1970 41-48, 1973, Parks, 1972). The widows are said to be preoccupied with grief, greater worry, lower morale and unhappiness (Riley and Foner, 1968). One undesirable system that forms part of the Hindu marriage is that there is restriction over remarriage of the widows. We tried to know the stand of the poor on the widow remarriage issue.

It is interesting to know that 94.0 per cent poor believe in the widow remarriage, only 6.0 per cent raise objections. More urban than rural poor permit widow remarriage (94.8 vs 92.6 per cent).

An interlinked issue which was examined was, 'where do the poor settle the remarriage of widows'? The majority of

the poor marry the widows with relatives (49.3 per cent) or family members (34.3 per cent). Relatively a small percentage (10.4 per cent) marry them outside the kith and kin nexus. More urban poor remarry widows with relatives (74.7 vs. 7.3 per cent) and more rural poor with the family members (73.3 vs. 10.8 per cent). Somewhat more rural than urban poor remarry widows outside the kith and kin. In other words, relatives and family members are more preferred for widow remarriage (see Table 10.14).

Table 10.14

Scope of widow remarriage in poor's family, in per cent

Scope of Widow Remarriage	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Outside kith and kin	12.0	9.6	10.4
Family members	73.3	10.8	34.3
Relatives	7.3	74.4	49.3
Widow remarriage is not permitted	7.4	5.2	6.0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

### Dissolution of the Marital Relationship

Divorce is rapidly gaining ground in modern society. It is just as marriage brings with a set of circumstances that demands adjustment, so does divorce. Divorce poses new sets of expectations and problems, a whole new reality to which the individual must adapt (Henslin, 1980:412). Hence,

we tried to know the pattern of dissolution of marriages of the poor in three interlinked dimensions one, extent of divorce, two, reasons for divorce, and finally, the agencies through which divorce is effected

As data in Table 10.15 reveals, the marriages are smooth in majority of cases (93.0 per cent). The frequency of divorce is less among the rural than among the urban poor (97.3 vs 90.8 per cent)

To sum up the divorce, by and large, is less prevalent. However, it is more pronounced among the urban than among the rural poor. However, small the percentage of divorce may be, it is important to note that one out of every sixteen marriage ends in divorce.

Table 10.15

Divorce in poor's family, in per cent

Divorced Members	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Yourself	0.0	0.4	0.3
Sons	0.7	0.4	0.5
Parents	0.0	1.2	0.8
Sisters	0.0	2.0	1.3
Daughters	1.3	2.0	1.5
Brothers	0.7	3.2	2.3
No divorce	97.3	90.8	93.3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

If we look at the family members where divorce has taken place, it appears that it is spread over various members of the poor's family, namely, brothers (2.3 per cent), daughters

(1.3 per cent), sons (0.5 per cent) and 0.3 per cent poor themselves

It transpires, then, that the disease of divorce is spreading, though slowly. The incidence of divorce is more among the present generation. It is still predominantly an urban phenomenon, although rural areas are also feeling its pinch.

Now, let us look at the reasons of the dissolution of their marriage. It is evident from Table 10.16 that there are three reasons responsible for dissolution of marriages. One is familial tension, other is dowry, and third is bad character. While dowry is responsible for the divorce almost equally in rural and urban areas (2.7 vs. 2.4 per cent), the familial tension, and crisis of character are exclusively urban reasons of divorce.

To put it precisely, the urban poor face the problem of mutual tension and character besides dowry, the rural poor are beset with the problem of dowry only. Perhaps because of the multiple reasons there is greater frequency of divorce among the urban than among the rural poor.

Table 10.16

Reasons for the dissolution of marriage, in per cent

Reason for Dissolution of Marriage	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Bad character	0.0	2.0	1.1
Dowry	2.7	2.4	2.6
Familial tension	0.0	4.8	3.0
No divorce	97.3	90.8	93.3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

Finally we tried to find out the agencies through which the dissolution of marriage is generally effected. The dissolution of marriage is generally held through the caste-panchayat in the majority of cases (82.2 per cent), here urban poor outnumber the rural poor (87.6 vs. 73.3 per cent). The second most important medium of dissolution of marriage is that the husband and wife starts living separately, which, in due course, becomes tantamount to divorce (16.6 per cent). This practice is more prevalent among the rural than among the urban poor (25.3 vs. 11.2 per cent). The legal divorce is the least popular method of dissolution of marriage among them both (1.2 per cent) and here there is almost identical situation (1.4 per cent rural, 1.2 per cent urban).

In summary, then, caste-panchayats and mutual separation are most popular means of dissolution of marriage. The divorce through courts is relatively less popular means.

### Migration

The term 'migration' connotes the geographical aspects of population mobility and involves "a change of place of abode, or place of usual residence". Here we operationally define migration as a change of residence from one civic division to another.

There are wide range of issues surrounding various measures of migration (U N , 1970). Our concern here is to find out the migration in terms of entropy — the measure of the frequency with which an event occurs within a system — in order to obtain deeper insight into migration (Berry and

Schwind, 1969 5-14), migration dividedness, i.e., in terms of a locality (region, province), and in terms of migrant or non-migrant or stayers and movers

#### The Nature of Household and the Place of Origin

A distinction is made between 'immigrant' and 'resident' household. An 'immigrant household' has been treated as one where the head of the family immigrated to the city from village at any time. The rest of the households, i.e., where the head of the family has been living in the city since birth has been treated as 'resident households'. Since no migration was found in this study from village to village, the analysis in sequel appertains to the migration of persons from village to the city only.

The data in Table 10.17 shows that only 16.8 per cent urban poor belong to resident household. As against, this the majority of them (83.2 per cent) have migrated from the villages and belong to immigrant household. This shows that the majority of the urban poor are rural migrants. In other words, the birth places of the majority of the urban poor are villages, only a minority of them were born in the city (83.2 vs 16.8 per cent).

The majority of the urban poor (97.2 per cent) hail from the state of Uttar Pradesh, only 2.8 per cent of them have come from outside Uttar Pradesh.

Table 10 17

The nature of household and the place or  
origin of the poor, in per cent

Nature of Household and Place of Origin		Urban Poor (N = 250)
<u>Nature of household</u>		
Immigrant household		83 2
Resident household		16 8
<u>Place of origin</u>		
<u>State</u>		
Uttar Pradesh		97 2
Outside Uttar Pradesh		2 8
<u>District</u>		
Kanpur		25.0
Outside Kanpur		75 0

When we look at the district to which the urban poor belong, it is found that three-fourth of the urban poor belong to districts other than Kanpur, only one-fourth were belonging to Kanpur district.

#### Reasons for Selecting Kanpur City for Migration

An analysis of the reasons for selecting Kanpur city for migration reveals that 72 4 per cent poor have selected this city because of the pull factor, they saw better chances of getting employment. The other reason for migration to city of Kanpur are its nearness from their native place (5 2 per cent), awareness with the local language (4.0 per cent) and relatives (1.6 per cent).

This, then, shows that the economic factor is the main consideration behind the poor's choice for this city. Kanpur being an industrial town perhaps provides a wide range of opportunities for employment to the rural folk

Table 10 18

Reasons for selecting Kanpur city for migration, in per cent

Reasons for Selecting Kanpur City	Urban Poor
1 Relatives and friends	1 6
2 Awareness with local language	4 0
3 Nearness from the native place	5 2
4 Better prospects of employment	74 4
5 No migration	16.8
Number of cases	(250)

#### Frequency of Migration

We tried to find out the frequency of migration in two ways one, the frequency of migration at different places before coming to Kanpur, and, two, the frequency of migration within the city of Kanpur.

As many as 69.4 per cent urban poor have migrated to the city for the first time, only a small percentage migrated twice (8.4 per cent), thrice (3.6 per cent), and more times (1.8 per cent). This shows that most of the urban poor have tried to settle where they migrated first, however, a small percentage did move more frequently

As regards the frequency of migration of the poor within the city itself, it transpires from the data that most of the urban poor have migrated within the city twice (55.2 per cent), only one-fifth have moved only once within the city. Those who have moved within the city thrice or even more than that constitute 8.0 per cent. The frequent movement within the city of a larger number of urban poor shows that they feel insecure and move in search of better opportunity from place to place.

#### Reasons of Migration

We further analysed the causes of migration in terms of pull and push factors. It is evident from Table 10.19 that the "pull factor" — the search of employment in cities — compelled 32.4 per cent poor to migrate to the city. As against this, the push factors compelled over half of the urban poor to migrate. The specific push factors that were operative are search of employment (32.4 per cent), lack of land (26.4 per cent), meagre income (19.6 per cent), indebtedness and familial conflict (each 2.4 per cent).

#### The Intentions of Immigrants Regarding Stay in the City

While 42.0 per cent poor migrated to the city with the intention to stay permanently, only 15.6 per cent came to stay temporarily. A significant percentage of the poor, say 42.0 per cent, is not able to decide whether to settle permanently or not. The intention of 42.0 per cent immigrants

Table 10 19  
Reasons of migration, in per cent

Reasons for Migration	Urban Poor
<u>Pull-factor</u>	<u>32 4</u>
Search of employment	32 4
<u>Push-factor</u>	<u>50 8</u>
No enough land	26.4
Meagre income	19 6
Indebtedness	2 4
Family differences	2 4
<u>Did not migrate</u>	<u>16 8</u>
Number of cases	(250)

to settle in the city permanently is a significant pointer to the fact that they are fed up with their native place and find in the city a better place to live

#### Immigrants' Ties with Their Native Place

Whether the immigrants have any tie with their place of origin is reflected from the data available. Over 64.0 per cent immigrants visit their native place frequently as against nearly 19 0 per cent who pay no visit. It means that most of the immigrants continue to maintain relations with their native place, although some have broken their relations.

Information regarding why the immigrants visit their native place shows that 46 0 per cent immigrants visit their native place in order to look after the family members left behind in the village and participate in familial

ceremonial occasions (14.0 per cent). The care of property at the place of origin is the next reason for their visit (4.4 per cent). Thus the family ties — care of children and property or participation in ceremonial occasions — are main reasons for immigrants' visit to their native place.

#### The Poor's Perception of Change in Their Level of Living after Migration

At this stage it was considered proper to find out the poor's perception of their levels of living in the city as compared to that of native place. The majority of the poor (53.6 per cent) feel that their level of living is better here in the city than what it was in their native places, whereas 29.6 per cent poor feel it to be worse. It implies, then, that the condition of the poor in the villages is relatively bad.

In conclusion, then, the majority of the sample population falls in the age-group of 30-50 years, although rural poor outpace the urban poor. The mean age for rural poor is 41.9, urban poor is 37.6, and for the whole is 39.3 years.

The majority of the poor belong to the backward caste and Scheduled Caste, the high caste is relatively in minority. This is true for both rural and urban sample.

There are only two religious groups in the sample: Hindu and Islam. The Hindus outnumber the Islam.

The majority of the rural poor belong to the joint family and the urban poor to nuclear family. The size of the family of the majority of the rural poor is larger consisting

of 7-and-more members and of urban poor smaller consisting of 2-5 members

On the whole, the urban poor prefer nuclear family and the rural poor the joint family. The family is seen as a source of security in both economic and other calamities. However, the urban poor suspect the head of the household

Much against the general belief, the poor do not nurture an ill-will against the birth <sup>of</sup> child, although a small minority from both the poor groups resent the birth of more children in the family

Nearly cent-per-cent poor are married. A small proportion of them are widower or divorcee. The divorce and dissolution is generally the characteristic of urban than that of the rural poor

Most of the poor are married only once, although some of them have married twice and thrice. The incidence of frequent marriage is slightly higher in rural than urban areas

The majority of the poor, irrespective of their background, were married before <sup>attaining</sup> the age of 15 years. Only a small proportion was married when they crossed the age of 15; and this was more true of urban than of rural poor. There is a gap between ideal and real on the question of age at marriage for girls and boys. At the ideal level, both the poor groups are in favour of enhanced age at marriage for boys and girls, but they marry or plan to marry their sons and daughters at an early age

Keeping in view the limits and limitations of earning, it can be said that the poor spend or intend to spend more money on marriages of their sons and daughters. They view the dowry system positively as most of them feel that it is a source of support to them.

The poor do not have inhibitions in the remarriage of the widows. The widows are remarried either to relatives or to the family members. In some cases, they remarry outside family and relations. In very few cases, there is restriction on remarriage.

The marital relations of most of the poor is by and large smooth. There are, however, some disruptions, more urban than rural marriages collapse. The marriage dissolution is more rampant in the present than the past generation. The main reasons for dissolution of the marriages are non-payment of promised dowry in the rural areas and familial tension, and bad character in urban areas. The poor seldom go to the court to seek divorce, either their caste panchayat adjudicates and separates, or they start living separately of their own which, in due course, assumes the shape of divorce.

The present trend of migration is that it is taking place from the rural to urban, not a single case of migration was reported from village to village.

In urban areas, there are predominantly immigrant household — that is, having migrated from rural to urban areas, the proportion of immigrant resident — that is, those born in the city, is relatively small. Most of the immigrants belong to the State of Uttar Pradesh. However, they have come

to Kanpur from different districts of the State. The immigrants migrated to the city mainly in search of employment. Most of them migrated only once before coming to Kanpur, but some of them did migrate twice and thrice or even more. Even after their arrival to the Kanpur proper, the poor have moved in different parts of the city for a number of times.

Both pull and push factors are operative behind the poor's migration. The pull factor is the image of better employment opportunity in the Kanpur city. The push factors are lack of land, meagre income, indebtedness, and family differences.

A significant proportion of the immigrants has decided not to return back to villages. However, an equal proportion of them are not undecided about their future course of life. The immigrants maintain their ties with the place of their origin and pay visit to their native place frequently. The main reasons for visit to their native place are care of the property, participation in ceremonies, and looking after the family members left in the villages.

The majority of the poor feel that there is definite improvement in their living standard after their arrival in the city.

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## CHAPTER ELEVEN

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### VALUES, INTERESTS, AND ACTIVITIES

With this chapter our attention shifts to the social values, general interests, and social activities of the poor. "A value is", says Kluckhohn, "a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, and means of action" (Kluckhohn, 1962 395). In other words, a value is that which is considered desirable, which is thought worthy of being pursued regardless of whether or not it is, in fact, being pursued. Furthermore, "All values are situationally anchored" (Honigman, 1963 191). That is to say, the circumstances often demand that value be compromised or contradicted by situational adaptations. The source of the value lies chiefly in the sentiments which make something valuable, others not valuable. 'Interest' refers to the "desire on the part of the individual for the good of himself or for the good of the group to which he belongs or with which he identifies himself" (Neal, 1965 9). By 'social activities' is meant the behaviour which is oriented to some object or purpose (Parsons, 1937). By definition the act pivots on the end (Davis, 1969 123). Interests arise from, and ends are chosen with reference to, values. In the pages that follow, an attempt shall be made to analyse the social values, interests, and activities of the poor.

## Social Values

There are two contrasting views of explaining the values of the poor. The popular view is the idea of a 'culture of poverty'. The concept of 'culture of poverty'<sup>(1)</sup> is premised on the assumption that there is a large geographical unit inhabited by the poor where they live an organized social life with a distinctive set of values and beliefs called "the values of the poor". There are two immediate implications of this thesis: one, it suggests a social grouping that does not share the basic assumptions of everyday life of the larger society, and, two, this social grouping has undergone a set of experiences that is different from other groups in the community. Here the distinctiveness of the culture of the poor is emphasized (Miller, 1958).

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<sup>1</sup>The concept of the 'culture of poverty' was first suggested by Lewis in 1959. In 1966, he argued that the culture of poverty be most accurately be called a 'sub-culture', but he was retaining this term for its brevity (Lewis, 1959, 1966). Lewis observed "In anthropological usage, the term culture implies, essentially a design for living which is passed down from generation to generation. In applying this concept of culture of the understanding of poverty, I want to draw attention to the fact that poverty in modern nations is not only a state of economic deprivation, of disorganization, or of the absence of something. It is also something positive in the sense that it has a structure, a rationale, and defence mechanisms without which the poor child hardly carry on. In short, it is a way of life, remarkably stable and persistent, passed down from generation to generation along family lines. The culture of poverty has its modalities and distinctive social and psychological consequences for its members (Lewis, 1961).

Others present an opposite view and argue that there is no unique lower class subculture, but there is rather, what Rodman calls, a 'value stretch' (Rodman, 1963). This implies that the poor do not abandon the general values of the society, but while reacting with the general values of the society, they do develop an alternative set of values. In other words, the poor share the general values of society, with members of other classes, but, in addition, they also develop an alternative values, which help them adjust to their deprived circumstances. Scholars have tried to term it as reaction to their deprived situations.<sup>2</sup> Be as it may, the culture of poverty springs up in a variety of contexts.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>For example, Walter B. Miller and Albert K. Cohen each discusses three different types of lower class reactions (Miller, 1959 231, Cohen, 1955 128-130). Merton, Parsons, and Dubin respectively discuss four, eight, and fourteen different types of (not necessarily lower-class) deviant reactions (Merton, 1959 141-157, Parsons, 1951 256-267, Dubin, 1959 147-164).

<sup>3</sup>In La Vida, Lewis observes that "The culture of poverty can come into being in a variety of historical contexts. However, it tends to grow and flourish in societies with the following set of conditions: (1) cash economy, wage labour and production for profit, (2) a persistently high rate of unemployment and underemployment for unskilled labour, (3) low wages, (4) the failure to provide social, political and economic organization, either on a voluntary basis or by government imposition, for the low income population, (5) the existence of a bilateral kinship system rather than a unilateral one, and finally, (6) the existence of a set of values in the dominant class which stresses the accumulation of wealth and property, the possibility of upward mobility and thrift, and explains low economic status as a result of personal inadequacy or inferiority. The way of life which develops among some of the poor under these conditions is the culture of poverty" (Lewis, 1969 48-49; See also Herzog, 1963.389-402).

We have focussed here on the poor's religiosity, prejudices, egalitarian values, time orientation, and scientific values

### Religiosity Among the Poor

Religion, concerned as it is with shared beliefs and practices (Durkheim, 1965 62), is pre-eminently social and found universally in every human society of which we have any record. On the one hand religion has been characterized "as embodying the most sublime of human aspirations, as being a bulwark of morality, a source of public order and inner individual peace, as ennobling and civilizing in its effect on mankind" (O'Dea, 1969 2). On the other hand, it has been accused of "being a stubborn obstacle retarding progress, and of promoting fanaticism and intolerance, ignorance, superstition and obscurantism (O'Dea, 1969 2). Religion is a very important part of the world of imagination (Merton, 1958 19-84) that functions socially, as well as individually. At the societal level, religion has both manifest and latent functions. It helps people to cope with "the points of maximum strain and tension in human life" when "expectations in the fulfilment of which people have acquired a deep emotional investment are doomed to frustration" (Parsons, 1964 164-167) — the frustrations resulting from uncertainty, powerlessness and ethical indifference which characterize human conditions (Radcliffe-Brown, 1948, Malinowski, 1954, Freud, 1961).

Religious beliefs in god is the symbolic representation of moral authority and superiority of society over its

individual members (Durkheim, 1965 236-237, Svanson, 1964, Simmel, 1957) It may also support and legitimate the content of the dictates of society (Winter, 1977 26, Parsons, 1944 176-190) as also everyday values and goals For Marx, "Religion is the sign of the oppressed creatures, the heart of the heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation It is the opium of the people" (Marx and Engels, 1964 42) On a more individual level, the very safety of life and limb is at the mercy of unpredictable shelling by unseen forces one may do what he can, to protect himself, yet one remains utterly helpless in the face of a direct hit when his 'number is up' (Feifet, 1974 353-360, Nelson, 1974 263-272, Lewis and Lopreato, 1962 508-514). When man confront 'breaking points' or what Max Weber has called "the problem of meaning" in the socially structured round of daily behaviour, he finds its answer in some kind of beyond itself Religion helps one to cope with the inevitable frustrations of life by providing an explanation of the why the world is as it is In the words of Davis, "By giving him a world beyond this one, a sort of invisible shell around the factual sphere, the culture enables the individual to interpret any catastrophe (Davis, 1949 532). We, therefore, thought to analyse the religiosity of the poor

Empirically, there are five dimensions of religion (1) ideological, (2) ritualistic, (3) consequential, (4) intellectual, and (5) EXPERIMENTAL<sup>2</sup> (Glock, 1968 253-261) We have examined the religiosity of the poor on the basis of the first four dimensions

The ideological dimension consists of the beliefs which the poor hold concerning the divine, or whatever they take to be the ultimate reality or transcendental authority. Table 11.1 orders the major deities in which the poor believe. At the extreme, nearly 88.0 per cent believe in God: more rural than urban poor do so (94.0 vs. 76.7 per cent). At the other end, nearly 12.0 per cent believe in the spirits appearing after death, variously known as ghost (Bhuta), Preta, Zin, Brahma and demon (evil spirits), here urban poor outnumber the rural poor (23.3 vs. 6.0 per cent). The majority of the poor (72.7 per cent) believe in family deities, and, here again, the urban poor outnumber the rural poor in their belief in family deities (94.0 vs. 60.0 per cent).

The question, then, is whether belief in the 'spirits after death', and 'family deities', has a religious significance beyond that belief in the supernatural. It is possible that belief in spirits or after death and family deities per se are particularly poor measures of religiosity. Belief in them need not connote a commitment to religion. In fact, it can be argued that the god-men have sought to capitalize upon all these beliefs. Furthermore, the religious and secular spheres of life are not distinguished in rural context. For the rural poor, religion pervades all aspect of life. So they believe in God more than the urban poor. It is clear, then, that the rural poor show greater 'religious-involvement' in so far as the belief in the ultimate reality or God is concerned. The urban poor, however, believe in spirits appearing after death more than the rural poor.

Table 11 1

The poor's belief in different deities, in per cent

	Proportion of the Poor Having Belief in Different Deities					
	Rural Poor	Cases	Urban Poor	Cases	Rural + Urban Poor	Cases
Ultimate reality	94 0	(150)	76 7	(250)	87 5	(400)
Spirits appearing after death	6 0	(150)	23 3	(250)	11 5	(400)
Family deity	60 0	(150)	94.0	(250)	72 7	(400)

One of the basic beliefs of Hindus is that the men are bound by the chain of death and birth until liberated. And the belief in 'rebirth' theory is far and wide. It is found that the majority of the poor (97.5 per cent) believe in the doctrine of rebirth. There is almost complete similarity between the two groups of poor on this count (98.7 per cent urban, 96.8 per cent rural).

Our findings find support by studies conducted elsewhere. For example, while dealing with religious beliefs, Lynd and Lynd write " . members of the working class show a disposition to believe their religion more ardently and to accumulate more emotionally charged values around their beliefs. Religion appears to operate more prominently, as an active agency of support and encouragement among this section of the city" (Lynd and Lynd, 1929)

Coming to the ritualistic dimension of the poor's religiosity, we focussed on both ritual and devotion. In rituals, we elicited information regarding fast. The majority of the poor observe fast (87.4 per cent). Of interest, more urban than rural poor observe fast (cent per cent urban vs 80.0 per cent rural).

Further we inquired about 'shall' and 'shall not' injunctions in matters of food and drink. The majority of the poor (83.0 per cent) are non-vegetarian. Here rural poor outnumber the urban poor (87.2 vs 76.0 per cent). In case of addiction, the majority of the poor do not mind addiction, only 12.0 per cent urban and 3.2 per cent rural poor are in favour of putting restrictions on addiction. This, then, shows that the rural poor are more prone to non-vegetarian diet.

In devotional aspect, our attention was on paying visit to pilgrimage centres. It is evident from the data that 56.0 per cent poor go to the pilgrimage centres, the urban poor outpace the rural poor (78.7 vs 42.4 per cent).

Table 11.2

Proscription on food and drink, in per cent

Proscription on Food and Drink	Rural Poor	Cases	Urban Poor	Cases	Rural + Urban Poor	Cases
Non-vegetarian diet	12.8	(150)	24.0	(250)	17.0	(400)
Addiction	3.2	(150)	12.0	(250)	6.5	(400)

Let us now look at the 'doing' dimension of the poor's religiosity. A religious man expects to receive rewards as a result of being religious. By virtue of being religious, he is also expected to do 'good work' which will ultimately fructify and fetch him the intended results. The consequential dimension, like ritualistic dimension, defines what a religious person does. There are various sorts of good deeds which a religious man does but we have taken only giving of alms. As many as 83.7 per cent poor do give alms to the other poor, only 16.3 per cent give no alms. The intellectual dimension of religion consists of what one knows about the myths and beliefs of a given religion and the content of scriptures. This was ascertained by the extent to which they read religious texts.

As is evident from Table 11.3, 85.8 per cent poor do not read any religious book, and, here, rural poor outweigh the urban poor (89.2 vs. 80.0 per cent). Of 14.2 per cent who read some religious scriptures, 9.2 per cent read Ram Charit Manas, 0.8 per cent Quran, and 0.5 per cent other sort of scripts. More urban poor read Ram Charit Manas (17.3 vs. 4.4 per cent), and more rural poor read Gita (4.8 vs. 2.0 per cent), and Quran (1.2 vs. zero per cent).

This, then, shows that Gita and Ram Charit Manas are the most favourite religious texts of the poor. Urban poor read religious scripts more than the rural poor.

To sum up, the religious context in which the poor are involved is multifaceted. The religious world perceived by them are inhabited by beings of different sorts from higher

Table 11 3

Religious texts the poor read, in per cent

Religious Books	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
<u>Ram Charit Manas</u>	4 4	17 3	9 2
<u>Gita</u>	4.8	2 0	3 7
<u>Quran</u>	1 2	0.0	0.8
Other scripts	0 4	0 7	0 5
Do not read	89 2	80.0	85 8
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

level gods to spirits after death. The poor adopt various rituals like observing fast, visits to pilgrimages, and participation in special sacraments. They do 'good deeds', and, to some extent, follow proscriptions on diet and drink. They believe in the traditional doctrine of reincarnation and read religious texts. These religious involvements are indicators of the poor's religiosity. Various studies conducted elsewhere also suggest that the lower classes are more religious when religiosity is measured by personal belief and private practices (Lynd and Lynd, 1929, Lenski, 1961, Glock et al., 1967, Fukuyama, 1961 154-161, Demarath, 1958).

#### Fatalism and Pessimism

The poor are said to suffer from the pessimism and fatalism because of their social situation. "Pessimism and fatalism about being able to affect one's own situation stems

from a feeling of being victimized by superordinate, capricious, and malevolent natural and social forces. Their lives appear to them to be fixed by the immutable forces of fate, luck, and chance. While well-to-do people tend to attribute causality to inner forces, the poor tend to make external attributes of causality, seeing themselves as subject to external and arbitrary forces and pressures" (Haggstrom, 1980: 137).

In order to find out the extent of pessimism and fatalism, the poor were asked to show their agreement with two statements: (1) 'The poverty is a matter of fate', and (2) 'The poor can never prosper'.

Their responses in Table 11.4 show that the majority of the poor, irrespective of their contextual background, agree that the 'poverty is the result of the fate'. Only a small percentage of the poor (20 per cent from each group) consider poverty to be the result of factors other than the fate.

The majority of the poor feel that the poor can never prosper, the urban poor outnumbering the rural poor (93.6 vs. 81.3 per cent). It is obvious, then, that the poor, by and large, are very much pessimistic about their future and have faith in fate. The urban poor seem to be more pessimist than that of the rural poor.

The contextual background seems to have significant association with the pessimism of the poor (0.05 level).

The poor's pessimism and fatalism is further reflected by the causes of poverty the poor advance. The poor consider only two causes of their poverty: luck and poor earning.

Table 11 4

Fatalism and pessimism among the poor, in per cent

	Proportion Showing Agreement					
	Rural Poor	Cases	Urban Poor	Cases	Rural + Urban Poor	Cases
1. Poverty is the result of fate	98 0	(150)	98 0	(250)	98 0	(400)
2 The poor can never prosper	81 3*	(150)	93 6 *	(250)	89 0	(400)

\* Significant at .05 level

Two-fifth of the sample assign their poverty to luck and three-fifth to insufficient earning. More rural poor think that they are poor due to bad luck (68.7 vs. 22.8 per cent), and more urban poor consider insufficient earning as the cause of their poverty (77.2 vs. 31.3 per cent). Notice that both the poor groups believe bad luck to be the cause of their poverty, although it is predominantly the characteristic of the rural poor. Less earning is, of course, a rational reason of poverty, has again been mentioned by them both. Here, however, urban poor outnumber the rural poor.

### The Poor's Prejudices

Prejudice refers to prejudgement. Prejudice exists where a person tends to perceive, feel and act towards another person in favourable or unfavourable manner on the basis of his membership of a particular group. Discrimination implies

different treatment of individuals belonging to certain groups. In any social group, each person's outlook is the effect as well as the cause of his surroundings which confirm various sorts of prejudices. Prejudice is, thus, a "normal" characteristic of any group. The only thing that removes the prejudices is insight from experiences which negate the stereotypes.

However, prejudices are hard to shake. There is also a virulent kind of prejudice which draws its force from man's inner conflicts, from a kind of self-hatred which is projected on others.

There is a great deal of prejudice and discrimination in our society against the poor and lowly. Stereotypes that are used about the poor are such as obscene, dirty, loud, lazy, promiscuous, happy, and irresponsible (Rodman, 1964, 1965). These stereotypes reflect prejudicial attitudes. A large number of scholars have pointed to presumed defects in the mentality or behaviour of disadvantaged classes, and then, go on to explain their social position and deprivation as resulting from these internal deficiencies. For instance, Frazier saw the lower-class life as "all bad". Glazer writes that "his (the Negro) failure to strive and to curb his impulses would be seen as his failure rather than society's failure . . ." (Frazier, 1966 XVI, Glazer and Moynihan, 1963, Sapir, 1924 401-429, McEntire, 1960). Others have viewed the poor as a threat to social stability and public order (Miller, 1958 5-19; Ferman et al., 1965). Still others call them 'disreputable poor' — "an immobilized segment of society

located at a point in the social structure where poverty intersects with illicit pursuits. They are, in the evocative words of Charles Brace, "the dangerous classes" who live in "regions of squalid want and wicked vice" (Matza, 1966, 1966 317-338)

The social scientists have concluded that "there is much egoism, envy, and hostility among the poor towards those who prosper. There are many negative attitudes and few positive ones. The unity of the poor comes about through suspicion or, and resentment towards, outsiders, through opposition to common enemies and hostility to powerful groups. Disillusion about the possibility of advancement stems from a victim complex in relation to the powerful. . . The outside world cannot be trusted, it must be defended against. Outsiders and outside are seen as risky, likely to injure you when you least expect it" (Haggstrom, 1965 317). In order to elicit the prejudices in the mind of the poor about the prosperous, the question that was put to them was

Do you agree that the prosperous people make the following comments on the poor

- 1 The poor are less intelligent by birth
- 2 The poor are wicked by nature.
- 3 The poor are quarrelsome
- 4 The poor are criminals

Table 11.5 contains the responses of the poor. Over half of the sample population (53.0 per cent) had the impression that the nonpoor consider the poor to be less intelligent. This feeling is nurtured more strongly by the rural than by the urban poor (85.3 vs. 33.6 per cent). As many as

Table 11 5

Agreement of the poor with the statements  
reflecting their personality, in per cent

Statement	Proportion of Poor Showing Agreement					
	Rural Poor	Cases	Urban Poor	Cases	Rural + Urban Poor	Cases
1 The poor are less intelligent	85 3	(150)	33 6	(250)	53 0	(400)
2 The poor are wicked by nature	99 3	(150)	98 8	(250)	99 0	(400)
3 The poor are quarrelsome	7 3	(150)	38 0	(250)	26 5	(400)
4. The poor are criminals	6 7	(150)	23 6	(250)	17 4	(400)

99 0 per cent poor agree that the nonpoor consider them wicked by nature, and here there is complete similarity between the two groups (99 3 per cent rural, 98 8 per cent urban)

Interestingly, the poor carry the impression that the nonpoor, by and large, think them to be docile and submissive, and non-criminals. Both these feelings are nurtured more by rural than urban poor. This, then, shows that the poor have several prejudices against the rich and prosperous.

#### Egalitarian Values

The poor are said to nurture the feeling that the non-poor do very many injustices to them and does all possible things to perpetuate inequality and deprive them of their chances of life. In order to understand the veracity of these feelings, a series of statements was put before the

poor which together, speak about the egalitarian values of them. At the ideal level, the majority of the poor want equal treatment between rich and poor in society. For instance, 93.7 per cent poor are of the view that both rich and poor be given the same medical treatment. Nearly 98.0 per cent poor wish there should be no discrimination between the rich and poor in matters of food. Also, 95.5 per cent poor want parity in matters of food among the school-going children of the rich and the poor. In all these cases, the urban poor agree more strongly than the rural poor. Likewise, the poor, by and large, wish that children of both rich and poor should play together. Also, 76.3 per cent poor do not favour the idea that 'the government should close down the institutions where only rich children are being taught'. In both stances, the urban poor disagree with the statement more strongly than their rural counterparts.

It shows that the poor want equality, but do not favour any drastic action that may upset the social system. Urban poor, as compared to the rural poor, hold egalitarian values more strongly than the poor.

These, then, are the ideal egalitarian values of the poor. Let us now look at the feelings of the poor in actual dealings. The poor are disgruntled at the practical level, only 28.5 per cent poor feel that the sons of the poor get job opportunities similar to the sons of the rich, and barely 29.8 per cent say, 'public services are equally available to both the rich and the poor'. In each case, the rural poor seem to be more (Table 11 )

Table 11 6

Egalitarian values of the poor, in per cent

	Proportion Showing Agreement					
	Rural Poor	Cases	Urban Poor	Cases	Rural + Urban Poor	Cases
1 The master and servant be given similar medical treatment	86 7	(150)	98 0	(250)	93 7	(400)
2 There should be no discrimination in matters of food among the rich and poor.	96.7	(150)	98 4	(250)	97 7	(400)
3 The government should close down the educational institutions where only rich children are getting education.	26 7	(150)	22 0	(250)	23 7	(400)
4. In schools, there should be parity in matters of food among rich and poor children	93 3	(150)	96 8	(250)	95 5	(400)
5. Rich children should not play with the poor children.	24.0	(150)	12 8	(250)	17 0	(400)

frustrated than the urban poor (42 0 vs 20 4 per cent, and 42 0 vs 22 4 per cent, respectively).

If Table 11.7 is compared with Table 11.6, it transpires that there is a gap between ideal and real values of the poor. At the ideal level, they wanted greater equality to prevail, but at practical level they find

Table 11 7

The poor's views about the equality of opportunity  
available to them, in per cent

		Proportion of the Poor Showing Agreement					
		Rural Poor	Cases	Urban Poor	Cases	Rural + Urban Poor	Cases
1	The sons of the poor get job-opportunities similar to the sons of the rich	42 0	(150)	20 4	(250)	28 5	(400)
2	Public services are equally available to both the rich and the poor	42 0	(150)	22 4	(250)	29.8	(400)

equality lacking The majority of the rural and urban poor had opined that there is absence of the equality or opportunity, they are discriminated when the real occasions come, such as job opportunities.

#### Time-Orientation

There is a rough consensus among social scientists that

"Caught in the present, the poor do not plan very much. They meet their troubles and take their pleasures on a moment-to-moment-basis, their schemes are short-term Their time perspective is fore shortened by their belief that it is futile to think of the future Thus, when the poor use conventional words to refer to the future, those words tend to be empty of real meaning. They have little sense of the past and they go forward, but not forward to any preconceived place. Their pleasures and rewards are sought in the present, they find it difficult to delay gratification, to postpone satisfaction" (Haggstrom, 1965 316-317).

Taking a lead from these generalizations, we ascertained the poor's orientation towards time

To begin with, we asked about respondents' orientation towards present. Taking clue from the doctrine of Karma, which every Hindu believes in, we sought their agreement with the statements "man's present is determined by the past", and "one's future is in his own hand". The responses in Table 11.8 reveal that the majority of poor (91.0 per cent) have full faith in traditional Hindu philosophy and hold on that one's present life is determined by, or a product of, his past karmas. As is expected, the rural poor stick to this traditional belief more strongly than that of their urban counterparts (97.3 vs. 87.2 per cent). This relationship is significant at .01 level.

Table 11.8

The time-orientation of the poor, in per cent

	Proportion of the Poor Agreeing					
	Rural Poor	Cases	Urban Poor	Cases	Rural + Urban Poor	Cases
1 Man's present is determined by the past	97.3*	(150)	87.2*	(250)	91.0	(400)
2 One's future is in his own hands	20.0*	(150)	60.0*	(250)	38.3	(400)

\* Significant at .01 level.

Coming to the poor's orientation towards future, it may be seen that over three-fifth of the poor (61.7 per cent) believe that the future of man is not in his hands. By contrast, only nearly two-fifth (38.3 per cent) believe that man can control his future.

More rural than urban poor believe that the man's future is beyond his control (98.0 vs. 40.0 per cent). We earlier saw that the poor believed that their present is determined by their past. Again we find that they have less faith in keeping control over one's future. These beliefs show the pessimism of the poor. The distinction between rural and urban poor is marked and significant (0.01 level).

These findings disclose the fact that rural poor seem to be more conservative than their urban counterparts. The distinction is marked and significant (0.01 level). It proves the hypothesis formulated for the study that the rural poor are more conservative than the urban poor.

### Scientific Orientation

No amount of desire to obtain wealth and to go against traditional ways of life could produce economic transformation without the development of scientific aptitude (Inkeles, 1966; Shryck, 1962: 98-110). In order to find out the poor's scientific orientations, we tried to analyse their attitude towards adoption of new inventions. As is evident from Table 11.9, the majority of the poor merely develop curiosity to know, whenever they come to know about new inventions (78.0 per cent); the quantum of curiosity being more acute

Table 11 9

Reaction of the poor towards new inventions, in per cent

Reaction	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Curiosity	87 3	72 4	78 0
Adopt only after others have tested	8.0	5.6	6.5
Do not adopt	4.7	22.0	15.5
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

among the rural than among the urban poor (87.3 vs. 72.4 per cent). A small percentage from both the groups adopt the inventions once it has been tested by others, here, again, more rural than urban poor do so (8.0 vs. 5.6 per cent). One out of every six poor do not adopt the inventions and more urban than rural poor are reluctant to do so.

It transpires, then, that the rural poor are more attracted to new inventions than the urban poor as reflected from both curiosity and adoption.

The range of preparedness to accept new inventions, if the poor may afford, was the next question put before the poor. Nearly 80.0 per cent poor say they will not adopt new inventions even if they may afford and there is almost complete similarity between the two groups of the poor (80.0 vs. 78.8 per cent). A small proportion, say 0.5 per cent, is ready to adopt as early as possible. And, here again, there is similarity between the rural and urban poor (0.7 vs.

0.4 per cent) As against this, one out of five poor would prefer to wait and see before they would adopt and the similar pattern is reflected from both the groups

We ascertained the poor's belief in the modern medicare For this we chose to elicit their views on the certainty of death versus deference of premature death through modern medicare

The data at hand shows that 91.0 per cent poor believe that the death is god ordained, it cannot be deferred As against this, only 9.0 per cent poor hold the view that man can defer the period of premature death through modern medicare

Although the majority of the sample population from both the poor groups hold that the death cannot be avoided, it is largely a characteristic of rural poor (93.3 vs. 89.6 per cent).

In summary, then, for the poor, the death is God-ordained, something that cannot be deferred

### General Interests and Social Activities

Let us now analyse the general interests and social activities of the poor To begin with, we shall take up leisure-time and pursuits and then move on to their audio-visual entertainment interest and activities, readership habits, newspaper readership, intoxication habits and gambling.

#### Leisure Time and Pursuits

What is leisure? The leisure is the normative expression of 'free time' and connotes absence of routine practical

activities (Goodman, 1962 445-446). Leisure is generally opposed to labour which refers to work oriented to the fulfilment of necessities. Leisure or free time implies "the time not devoted to paid work, household and family maintenance, personal care, or sleep" (Peterson, 1981 170) Such time is "free" at least in the sense that it is free of these other obligations This free-time is voluntary and not under the compulsions such as unemployment or forced retirement But free time costs something because the time is not spent in gainful employment (see Becker, 1965 493-517, Linder, 1970, Gruenberg, 1974)

Leisure is the basis of culture It is linked to class and consumption practices and to distinctive style-of-life (Veblen, 1970 33) It serves to provide a solution to the dehumanized labour (Bacon, 1975 179-190) To some scholars, leisure is a symbol of progress However, many idealist scholars viewed leisure as a sort of penalty imposed by the development (Grazia, 1962, Glasser, 1970) Be as that may, the leisure is of crucial importance to the understanding of personality and life-style of the poor

Empirically, there are two dimensions of leisure one involves human activities such as time-measure, subjective measure, process measure, and expenditure on leisure activities. The other relates to the artifacts, the product of human activity, i.e., what human being creates during leisure Our focus will be only on the former.

Table 11.10 indicates that the poor like to spend a great deal of their leisure time in performing domestic work

Table 11 10

Leisure-time activities of the poor, in per cent

Leisure-Time Activities	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
1 Domestic work	68 0	64 8	66 0
2 Idling	20.0	28.4	25.3
3 Movement in the friend circle	9.3	5 2	6.7
4 Gossiping	2 7	1 6	2 0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

(66 0 per cent) Idling (25 3 per cent), and gossiping (2 0 per cent) do not claim much of their leisure time, although they do have some attraction. They also spend their leisure in moving among their friends (6 7 per cent).

More rural than urban poor's favourite leisure-time activities are domestic work (68.0 vs. 64 8 per cent), movement among friends (9 3 vs 5.2 per cent), and gossiping (2 7 vs 1.6 per cent). Idling is more frequent among the urban poor than among the rural poor (28 4 vs. 20 0 per cent). Despite these differences the same pattern of leisure time activities are reflected in both the groups.

At the start we mentioned that the domestic work is by definition excluded from the meaning of leisure. And, if we adhere to this, it can be said that only 34 0 per cent of the total pass their free-time in idling, meeting friends, and gossiping. More urban than rural poor pass their free time

in some of these activities (36 0 vs 32 0 per cent) In other words, the poor lack free-time and for them the concept of leisure implies doing light works. Most of the leisure time activities of the poor are passive and their time passes in informal social life

### Audio-Visual Entertainment

Motion-pictures and audio (pertaining to sound, especially broadcast sound) are two important means of recreation for the common masses. Among the motion pictures, most popular is the commercial cinema and in audio the radio. So we collected information regarding poor's movie-attendance and radio-listening interest

#### Movie-Attendance

Fading of traditional means of recreation has given high popularity to cinema as a source of recreation In the Indian context, it has greater importance because it is one of the best and the cheapest source of leisure time entertainment for the masses Though largely concentrated in urban areas, it attracts large number of people from the rural areas as well.

Table 11.11 reveals that over half of the sample population never goes to cinema and over three-tenths go sometimes or seldom. As against this, slightly over one-fifth poor visit to cinema frequently. This shows that the frequency of visit to cinema of the majority of respondents is very low

When the two groups are compared, it is found that nearly 99 0 per cent rural poor as against 22 0 per cent urban

Table 11 11  
Frequency of visit to cinema, in per cent

Frequency	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Frequently	0 0	29 2	18.3
Sometimes	1 4	48 8	31 1
Never (or almost never)	98.6	22.0	50.6
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

poor never go to movies. A small percentage (1.4 per cent) go to the movies sometimes or seldom. This shows that the rural poor are less exposed to the cinema. By contrast, in urban sample, we get 29.2 per cent regular movie goers. Even among those who go to movie sometimes or seldom, the urban poor outpace the rural poor (48.8 vs 1.4 per cent). Despite all this, even the degree of exposure of urban poor to movies is not much as 48.8 per cent seldom go to movies besides 22.0 per cent who never go.

#### Radio-Listening

Nearly half of the sample population do not listen radio-programmes (48.8 per cent). Of 51.2 per cent poor who do listen radio programmes, they are irregular and lack the radios too. More rural than urban poor do not listen to radio (93.3 vs 22.0 per cent). Among the urban poor, 16.0 per cent own radio sets, and the rest of others manage to listen wherever it is available.

## Newspaper Readership

Newspaper, due to wide circulation and cheapness, is much popular with common masses as well as elites. Now, it is available in libraries, or at some other common places. Some people may also contribute to it as it is cheap. So, we collected information about newspaper readership.

The majority of the poor are illiterate and/or bare literate. Only 8.2 per cent poor read newspapers, the rest of others do not. More urban than rural poor read newspapers (10.8 vs. 4.0 per cent).

## Intoxication Habits

In order to get rid of, nay, forget, the drudgery, the poor are said to use some intoxicant. We tried to ascertain this fact empirically. The majority of the poor (92.2 per cent) use some kind of intoxicant. And, here, there is almost complete similarity between rural and urban poor (91.3 vs. 92.8 per cent). Over 57.0 per cent poor use intoxicants regularly and over 35.0 per cent most frequently. The urban poor use intoxicants more regularly than the rural poor (84.8 vs. 11.3 per cent).

As is evident from Table 11.12 the most popular intoxicant is tobacco (34.1 per cent) followed by Bidi and cigarettes (9.8 per cent), betel leaf (8.5 per cent), and Ganza (7.7 per cent). A small proportion of the poor is also addicted to Bhang (1.8 per cent) and Charas (1.3 per cent).

The tobacco is most favourite intoxicant of the rural poor (60.7 per cent) and the liquor of the urban poor (46.4

Table 11.12

Type of intoxicants used by the poor, in per cent

Intoxicants	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Tobacco	60.7	13.4	34.1
Liquor	0.0	46.4	29.0
Bidi and/or cigarette	10.0	9.6	9.8
Betel-leaf	11.3	6.8	8.5
Ganza	8.0	7.6	7.7
Bhang	1.3	2.0	1.8
Charas	0.0	2.0	1.3
None	8.7	7.2	7.8
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

per cent) Smoking Bidi and/or cigarette, and betel-leaf chewing are slightly more popular among the rural than among the urban poor (10.0 vs. 9.6 per cent, and 11.3 vs. 6.8 per cent, respectively) Ganza seems to be equally popular among them both. Charas is used solely by the urban poor and more urban than rural poor are addicted to Bhang (2.0 vs. 1.3 per cent)

This, then, suggests that the use of intoxicants is popular among them both. One significant difference between the two groups is that the urban poor use a variety of intoxicants, particularly the intoxicants that create serious intoxication such as charas, liquor, and Bhang. The rural poor use mainly intoxicants like tobacco, bidi, and betel-leaf. It, then, shows that more costly and more serious intoxicants are used more by the urban than by the rural poor.

## Gambling

We next examined the poor's gambling habit. The gambling is "the deliberate wagering or staking of important or valuable considerations upon events, which, so far as parties to the wager can know, lie in the realm of pure chance or luck" (Collis, 1934 555). The consequences of gambling are many times hazardous as it may lead to personal, familial as well as social disorganization.

The data in Table 11.13 suggests that the majority of the poor (68.3 per cent) do not play gamble, only 31.7 per cent do so. Gambling seems to be more popular among the urban than among the rural poor (39.6 vs. 18.7 per cent).

Table 11.13  
Habit of gambling, in per cent

Gambling	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Yes	18.7	39.6	31.7
No	81.3	60.4	68.3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

### Case 11

Radhey, a Scheduled Caste, of age 31 years belongs to Naurangabad village. He is an agricultural wage labour and earns Rs. 100 per month. In his family there are six members. His daily activities include intoxication, gossiping with

friends and domestic works besides his main job, that is to say, wage labour. He is a great orthodox and believes in spirits appearing after death. He feels that birth and death are governed by super natural power. According to him there is discrimination among various sections of society which must be eradicated.

### Case 12

Budhai, 36 years, a carpenter by caste, and occupation hails from Govind Nagar Kachchi Basti slum. He is a migrant from a village of Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh. He earns Rs. 200 a month and he has to support a family of five members. He believes in god and other supernatural beings to a great extent and performs various religious activities. He feels that future is in the hands of god. He is so conservative that he feels that even a birth of child is a matter of god's mercy. According to him, rich section of society is better off than the poor one. His daily activities include prayer, carpentry, intoxication, and gossiping with neighbours in idle time.

To sum up. We analyzed the social values, general interests and social activities of the poor. The poor have a higher level of religiosity. They have faith in god, spirits appearing after death, and family deity and have faith in incarnation theory. The poor perform various rituals such as keeping fast, visit to pilgrimage centres, and worship their ancestors and, so on and to certain extent, observe diet restrictions. The poor believe in 'good works' and give alms

to other poor. At the level of knowledge dimension, the poor read religious books to some extent, for most of them are illiterate.

The poor have faith in fate and are pessimistic about their future life. Most of the poor consider the cause of their poverty to be bad luck. In the former case urban outweigh the rural poor and the situation is reverse in the latter.

The poor perceive that the nonpoor consider them intellectually weak, wicked by nature, and docile. More rural than urban poor nurture these feelings in their minds.

The poor want that there should be no discrimination between the rich and the poor in different domains of life such as medicare, food, education, and social interaction. But they feel that in real life the discriminations prevail.

More rural than urban poor believe that man's present is determined by their past and more urban than the rural poor feel that their future is in their control.

The poor, by and large, show curiosity in the new inventions, the level of curiosity being higher among the rural than among the urban poor. And, more rural than urban adopt new inventions. The poor, on the whole, believe that modern medicare cannot defer the premature death — a clear-cut rejection of rational means.

Coming to the general interests and social activities, the poor pass their leisure in passive activities such as idling and gossiping or attend to the domestic work when have free-time.

The rural poor never or almost never go to movies. The urban poor do go to movies but very seldom. Over half of the sample population never go to see films in cinema houses. The radio-listening is also less frequent, nearly half of the poor do not listen. The rural poor listen radio-programmes less frequently than the urban poor. This shows the poor exposure of the poor towards audio-visual mass media.

The intoxication of some sort is rampant among the poor. More urban poor use intoxicants regularly and more rural poor frequently. More urban than rural poor take intoxicants such as liquor and charas which have serious intoxicating effects than the rural poor.

Although the majority of the poor do not gamble, more urban than rural poor do so.

As the poor are, by and large, illiterate and/or bare literate, it is obvious that the majority of the poor do not read newspapers. Even among those who may read, only a small proportion does so, and that, too, more urban than the rural

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## CHAPTER TWELVE

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### POLITICS AND POWER

With this chapter our attention shifts to the poor's political participation and power-position. Max Weber defines politics as a "striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power either among states or among groups within a state" (Gerth and Mills, 1952: 78). "Power", to quote Weber again, "is the chance of a man or a number of men to realise their own will in a communal action, even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action" (Gerth and Mills, 1952: 180). Thus, according to Weber, every action oriented to power comes within the meaning of politics and every opportunity to realise one's will against the resistance of others comes within the meaning of power.

The foregoing definitions of politics and power serve our purpose well. But we must bear in mind that the striving for power is not just an accident in human life, it is rather a fundamental dimension of human life. The best known example of institutionalized power is that of the State. In the context of modern societies, therefore, whenever we try to examine the political behaviour of man, we will have to take into consideration his relationship with the State. Generally speaking the State refers to the totality of the institutions through which man's striving for power, or, in other words, his political behaviour, is regulated. Government, legislature, and judiciary are among the well-known

organs of the State. How does an individual feel about the various organs of the State, whether he wants to participate in the political decisions of the community, whether he wants to join a political party, are all political questions. In modern times, politics has emerged as a distinct profession. Accordingly, it has been attempted here to examine the political behaviour and values of the poor in terms of their perspectives on politics in general, their attitude towards participation in the political decisions, their ideas about best leaders and best government, awareness of the national affairs, etc.

To be sure, poverty, politics, and power are a disjointed trio (May, 1966 72-78). The poor are powerless in two senses: power over things and power over persons. In economic sense, the poor lack purchasing power and are, thus, deprived of the power over things valued. Since the poor are always employed by their employers, so they had to live always under the authority of others (French and Raven, 1959). Furthermore, the poor suffer from the lack of money. And, "Money", says Haggstrom, "is a generalized source of power over people through a right to control over goods and services. As such money is one of many kinds of power, poverty, therefore, is one of many kinds of powerlessness, of being subject to one's social situation instead of being able to affect it through action, that is, through behaviour which flows from decisions and plans" (Haggstrom, 1965 329). However, the consequences of poverty are not related to money and material alone, but to power relationship between persons. The position of the

poor persons in relation to superordinate forces are expression of two communities a superior and powerful community, and an inferior and weaker community

Our focus here is mainly on the following aspects of power and politics (1) organizational participation, (2) contact with the power elite, (3) association with political parties, (4) interest in national political affairs, (5) voting behaviour, (6) qualities of leadership, and (7) attitude towards government

#### Organizational Participation

We collected two types of informations relating to poor's organizational participation one, membership of organization, and, two, frequency of attending meetings Table 12.1 shows that 95.0 per cent poor are not member of any organization Among those who are members of some organization, the urban poor outnumber the rural poor (6.8 vs 2.0 per cent) It seems that the poor, by and large, have not been able to join any organization and whatever little interest is there in some of them, it is more a characteristics of the urban than that of the rural poor

In order to fathom the seriousness with which the poor treat organizations they are associated with, we asked about the frequency of their attending organizations' meetings Of those 5.0 per cent, who are members of some organizations, only 1.2 per cent attend meetings frequently and it is, again, exclusively urban poor's attribute (2.0 per cent). The rest of

Table 12 1

Membership of organization, in per cent

Membership	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Yes	2 0	6 8	5 0
No	98 0	93 2	95 0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

3 8 per cent attend the meetings seldom, but here, too, more urban than rural poor do so (4 8 vs 2 0 per cent)

It is evident, then, that the poor's organizational participation is at its lowest ebb. The rural poor show somewhat more reluctance than the urban poor.

In this connection, the poor were asked to tell whether they had to pay some membership-fee to seek the membership of the organizations. It is interesting to note that there is no membership-fee in most cases (4.2 per cent). Only a small percentage (0.8 per cent) has joined organization by paying fee.

The fact that most of the organizations do not charge any fee, even then the majority of the poor are reluctant to join shows that the poor do not take the organizations seriously.

#### Association with Local Committees

There are several occasions when local committees are formed where the poor live. We wanted to know whether the

poor associate themselves with such local committees. Only 4.5 per cent of the total sample are associated with local committees, the rest of 95.5 per cent are not. Somewhat more rural than urban poor are associated with the local committees (5.3 vs 4.0 per cent). Its one reason seems that local ties are more deeper in rural than in urban areas.

#### Membership of the Labour Union

Since most of the poor are wage-earner, it was found out whether they work in formal sector and have joined labour unions or they work in informal sector where no labour union exists to protect and promote their interest. Table 12.2 shows that nearly one out of seven respondents (15.5 per cent) are members of the labour union, while the rest of 84.5 per cent are not. The membership of labour unions seems to be predominantly a characteristic of the urban poor (23.2 per cent urban, 2.7 per cent rural). Its one reason is that the poor in urban areas work in industries, where labour unions exist. Of late, there are unions, or, to be more exact, caste panchayats, which decide what to work and how much wages to take. So, there is a section of the poor in rural areas who associate themselves with such unions or panchayats. Villages, however, lack formal sector and hence organized labour unions.

#### Poor's Contacts with Elite

Having examined the organizational participation, let us now look at the poor's personal contacts with elite — political and bureaucratic. Both varieties of elite are

Table 12.2

The poor's membership of the labour unions, in per cent

Membership	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Yes	2 7	23 2	15 5
No	97 3	76 8	84 5
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

supposed to, and come in, contact with the masses. And, the contact of the common man with the elite instills a feeling of powerfulness in them. So we tried to ascertain how far the poor are able to develop their contact with them. The data in Table 12.3 shows that 97.0 per cent poor have no contact with political or bureaucratic elites. Only 3.0 per cent poor have come in contact with political leaders. More rural than urban poor had such contacts (4.7 vs. 2.4 per cent).

What is true of the poor's contact with political elite is also true of their contact with the bureaucratic elite. Hardly 2.3 per cent poor have had some contact with the officers, here urban poor outpace the rural poor (3.2 vs. 0.7 per cent). It is clear, then, that the poor had no contact either with political or bureaucratic elite.

A rural interviewee said

"Chhote adamiyon ki aaj kaun sunata hai"

(who listens to men of low status these days)

The urban poor, too, carry out the similar feeling

Table 12 3

The poor's contact with the elite — political and  
bureaucratic, in per cent

Contact	Political Elite			Bureaucratic Elite		
	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Yes	4 7	2 4	3 0	0 7	3 2	2 3
No	95 3	97 6	97 0	99 3	96 8	97 7
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)	(150)	(250)	(400)

### Political Participation

We now come to the political participation of the poor. Let us begin with the analysis of the fit between the ideology of the poor and the political party they are associated with.

As is evident from Table 12 4, over half of the sample population (53.3 per cent) shows identification with Congress (I) followed by Bhartiya Janata Party (12.0 per cent), Socialist Party, Janata Party, and Communist Party (5.7, 5.3, and 1.3 per cent, respectively).

The Congress (I) is more popular among the rural than among the urban poor (57.2 vs 50.8 per cent). Bhartiya Janata Party is almost equally popular with both the poor groups, rural and urban (12.7 per cent rural, 11.6 per cent urban). Whereas Socialist Party is mainly the choice of urban poor (7.6 vs 2.7 per cent), Janata Party is mainly the choice of rural poor (8.0 vs 3.6 per cent). Communist Party is the

Table 12 4

Closeness between the ideology of the poor  
and of 'political parties', in per cent

Political Party	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Congress (I)	57.2	50.8	53.3
Bhartiya Janata Party	12.7	11.6	12.0
Socialist Party	2.7	7.6	5.7
Janata Party	8.0	3.6	5.3
Communist Party	-	2.8	1.7
None	19.4	23.6	22.0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

least popular in the rural areas, it is exclusively an urban phenomenon. It is significant to note that nearly one out of every five respondents had no affiliation with any political party. Here urban poor show more reluctance than the rural poor (23.6 vs 19.4 per cent).

Let us now look at poor's political affiliation. If the data in Tables 12 4 and 12 5 are compared, an interesting contrast appears. Ideologically, a larger proportion of the poor show their closeness with some political party (78.0 per cent). When seen from the viewpoint of political affiliation, relatively a small proportion of them are affiliated to some political party (31.7 per cent). This reflects the passive political participation of the poor.

Among those who are affiliated to some political party, Congress (I) attracts more poor than any other political party (22.7 per cent). Next of Congress (I) is Bhartiya Janata

Table 12 5

The poor's affiliation with political parties, in per cent

Political Party	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Congress (I)	17 3*	26 0*	22 7
Bhartiya Janata Party	0 7	5 6	3 7
Socialist Party	2 0	3 6	3 0
Communist Party	0 0	2 4	1.5
Janata Party	0 0	1 2	0 8
None	80 0	61 2	68.3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

\* Significant at 05 level

Party and Socialist Party (3 7 and 3 0 per cent, respectively). The least popular parties are Janata Party (0 8 per cent) and Communist Party of India (1 5 per cent).

More rural than urban poor have no affiliation with any political party (80 0 vs. 61.2 per cent). Among those who are affiliated to some political party, more urban than rural poor are affiliated to Congress (I) (26 0 vs. 17 3 per cent) and Bhartiya Janata Party (5 6 vs 0 7 per cent). Other political parties also attract urban poor more than the rural poor. Communist Party (2 4 vs. 0 0 per cent), and Janata Party (1 2 vs zero per cent).

In a way the findings of Table 12 4 are corroborated by Table 12 5. The patterns of affiliation with political parties and ideological orientations are the same.

Our findings suggest that urban poor are more affiliated to the political activities than the rural poor. The distinction is marked and significant (0.05 level).

One of our informants commented

"Khane-kamane se hi phurasat nahi, rajniti mein  
kya bhag lenge"

(There is no spare time after earning livelihood  
There is no question of taking part in politics)

The relationship between socio-cultural characteristics of poor and their affiliation to political parties may be known from Table 12.6

Majority of the rural poor engaged in agricultural activities are not affiliated to political parties (89.7 per cent). More rural than urban poor from non-agricultural wage earning occupation are, however, affiliated to political parties (73.9 vs. 40.3 per cent). There are 52.1 per cent urban salary earner who are affiliated with the political parties. This, then, highlights the fact that affiliation to political parties is a matter of kind of occupations the poor are engaged in. The relationship between two is marked and significant (0.05 level).

Income-wise break-up shows that more urban than rural poor from income bracket of Rs. 200-300 are affiliated to political parties (37.1 vs. 6.6 per cent). There are 43.4 per cent urban poor from income bracket of Rs. 300-and-above, affiliated to political parties while there is no rural poor to do so in the same income category. This further supports the fact that rise in income leads to more orientation towards

Table 12 6

Socio-cultural characteristics and political affiliation of the poor, in per cent

Socio-cultural Characteristics	Political Affiliation				
	Rural Poor		Urban Poor		Cases
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Occupation					
Cultivator and agriculture wage earner	10 3	89 7*	0 0	0 0	(0)
Non-agriculture wage earner	73.9	20 1	40 3	59.7	(171)
Self-employed/petty businessmen	100.0	0 0	10.7	83.3*	(30)
Salary earner	0 0	0 0	0 0	100.0	(1)
Not gainfully occupied	0 0	0 0	52 1	47 9	(48)
Number of cases					(250)
Income					
Rs. 200-and-less	35 7	64 3	34 3	64.7*	(34)
Rs. 200-300	6.6	93 4*	37.1	62.9	(140)
Rs. 300-500-and-above	0 0	100 0	43 4	56.6	(76)
Number of cases					(250)
Education					
Low	22.1	77 9	39 8	60.2	(220)
High	5.3	94 7	29 2	70.8	(24)
Number of cases					(250)
Caste					
High	17.5	82 5*	39.5	60.5	(7)
Low	22.6	77 4	34.5	65 5*	(13)
Number of cases					(50)

\* Significant at .05 level.

political affiliation Both the income and political affiliation are significantly related with each other ( 05 level)

The poor's affiliation with political parties in terms of education shows that highly educated poor are affiliated to political parties (29.2 vs. 5.3 per cent) More urban than rural low educated poor, too, are affiliated with political parties (39.8 vs 22.1 per cent) Further, we find that more low educated poor in both the areas (22.1 vs 5.3 per cent rural, 39.8 vs 29.2 per cent urban) are affiliated to political parties. It leads to conclusion that education has no impact on political affiliation of poor

More urban than rural poor from all castes are affiliated to political parties, 39.5 vs. 17.5 per cent high caste, 34.5 vs 22.6 per cent low caste

Among urban poor, non-caste and high caste is more affiliated with political parties (76.2 and 39.5 per cent, respectively) It reflects that caste of the poor plays a significant role in their affiliation with political parties The relationship is significantly marked ( 05 level)

We further collected information regarding the nature of poor's political participation As Table 12.7 shows, the majority of the poor do not help the political parties in any manner (67.7 per cent), and, here, the rural poor outnumber the urban poor (78.6 vs. 61.2 per cent) Among those who render some help to the political parties of their choice, more urban than rural poor participate in the election campaign during elections (30.8 per cent urban, and 20.0 per cent rural), take the party membership (4.0 vs. zero per

Table 12 7

The Poor's political participation, in per cent

Mode of Participation	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Party member	0 0	4 0	2 5
Office bearer	0 0	0 8	0 5
Sympathizer	0 7	2 0	1.5
Campaigner	20 0	30 8	26 8
Financial contributor	0 7	1 2	1.0
No help	78 6	61 2	67 7
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

cent), sympathizer (2.0 vs. 0 7 per cent), give contribution (1 2 vs. 0 7 per cent), and hold some responsible cadre in the party (0 8 vs zero per cent).

This, then, shows that the urban poor are more active in politics and render more active help to the party of their choice than that of the rural poor. However, the fact remains that the most of the poor — whether rural or urban — do not take active part in politics.

Our findings are supported by the observations of Lewis

"The lack of effective participation and integration in the major institutions of the larger society is one of the crucial characteristics of the culture of poverty. This is a complex matter and results from a variety of factors which may include . . . fear, suspicion, or apathy . . . People with a culture of poverty . . . usually do not belong to labour unions, are not members of political parties . . . " (Lewis, 1966 XLIII)

Finally, we tried to understand how the poor view politics. Table 12 8 indicates that most of the respondents

Table 12 8

The poor's perception of politics, in per cent

Poor's Perception of Politics	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
A game of tricks and dishonesty	33 3	30 4	31 5
Service to the society	17 3	36 4	29 3
It begets prestige	10 0	18 8	15 5
It is below dignity	20 0	5 6	11 0
Political life is unstable	12 0	4 0	7 0
Good source of earning money	7 4	4 8	5 7
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

treat politics as a game of tricks and dishonesty (31.5 per cent) and this is more true of the rural than of the urban poor. As against this, 29.3 per cent poor view politics as a source of service to the society, and on this point, the urban poor outnumber the rural poor (36.4 vs 17.3 per cent). Nearly one out of every seven respondents (15.5 per cent) consider politics as a medium of getting prestige. Here, again, urban poor outpace the rural poor (18.8 vs 10.0 per cent). More rural than urban poor nurture a negative feeling about politics. For example, relatively a larger proportion of the rural poor consider politics below dignity (20.0 vs. 5.6 per cent), unstable (12.0 vs 0.4 per cent), and good source of earning money (7.4 vs 4.8 per cent). And, if the image of politics as a profession below the dignity, as a source of earning money, as unstable life, and as a game of tricks and dishonesty is considered negative, it is obvious

that the poor, irrespective of their background, nurture a negative attitude towards politics, although it is more true of the rural than of the urban poor

#### The Poor's Interest in National Political Affairs

As is evident from Table 12.9, the majority of the poor (92.0 per cent) do not take interest in national political affairs. The urban poor are more indifferent to the national affairs as compared to the rural poor (5.6 vs. 12.0 per cent). It is obvious, then, that the poor, on the whole, find no interest in the national political affairs. More urban than rural poor are reluctant to know national political goings-on. This tendency of the poor tallies well with their psychological characteristics. "The poor tend to have a keen sense of the personal and the concrete, their interest typically is restricted to the self, the family, and the neighbourhood. Not struggling to escape their circumstances, the poor often regard their ordinary lives as being of much intrinsic interest" (Haggstrom, 1966: 315-334). Lewis (1966) says that the poor lack interest in the wider world.

#### Voting Behaviour

The poor have played an important role in shaping the political process of the country. Only political right they exercise is that they vote but participate less than other groups. So the political system has often been free to ignore them. Furthermore, the poor have no political party of their own and no other place to go politically. Therefore, the

Table 12.9

The poor's interest in the national  
political affairs, in per cent

	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Interested	12.0	5.6	8.0
Not interested	88.0	94.4	92.0
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

politicians count on the votes of poor (Gans, 1972 283-284)  
Table 12.10 shows that 93.5 per cent of the poor exercised  
their franchise during elections; the rural poor exercised  
their franchise more than the urban poor (93.7 vs. 90.4 per  
cent). Earlier we saw that the poor are least interested in  
politics but they do not miss the chance to vote. It must be  
mentioned in passing that even when men exercise the vote, it  
may not change their lives (Keech, 1968 109-109).

#### The Poor's Perception of the Political Leaders

Now we turn our attention towards the poor's perception  
of the political leaders. We focussed on three aspects of  
the leadership: (i) ideal qualities of political leaders,  
(ii) actual qualities of the present political leaders, and  
(iii) the qualities the poor keep in view while electing a  
political leader. These three dimensions conjointly combine  
the ideal and actual image of the leaders.

Table 12.10

Voting behaviour of the poor, in per cent

Exercised Franchise	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Yes	98.7	90.4	93.5
No	1.3	9.6	6.5
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

As Table 12.11 shows, the majority of the poor think that ideal political leaders are those who are helpful to the people (88.0 per cent), rural poor outweigh the urban poor on this score (89.3 vs. 87.2 per cent). Other qualities of the leader according to the poor are the leader should be intelligent (6.4 per cent urban, 4.0 per cent rural), creative (4.8 per cent urban, 1.4 per cent rural), and influential (2.0 per cent rural, 0.8 per cent urban).

To sum up the poor want leaders to possess sound personality in terms of intelligence and creativity at the ego level and helpful aptitude at the alter level. It is interesting that the pattern of poor's perception of qualities of an ideal leader is almost identical.

'What are the qualities of political leaders of the day?' was the next question put to the poor. Their responses reveal that the poor consider political leaders being selfish and corrupt (82.3 per cent) and there is almost unanimity among the rural and urban poor (82.7 and 82.0 per cent, respectively).

Table 12 11

The poor's perception of ideal political leader, in per cent

Ideal Qualities	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Helpful	89.3	87.2	88.0
Intelligent	4.0	6.4	5.5
Creative	1.4	4.8	3.5
Influential	2.0	0.8	1.2
Cannot say	3.3	0.8	1.8
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

As against, this, nearly 18 per cent poor find political leader active and helpful; here again there is almost complete similarity between the two groups of the poor — rural and urban poor (17.3 per cent rural, 18.0 per cent urban)

In summary, then, the majority of the poor irrespective of their contextual background, are suspicious of the present leaders. There is, however, a small percentage of the poor from both the groups who have positive perception of leaders (see Table 12 12)

Finally, we asked the poor about the qualities they keep in mind while electing a leader during elections

It is evident from Table 12 13 that the majority of the poor (56.3 per cent) elect a leader of high socio-economic status, here urban poor outnumber the rural poor (58.0 vs 53.3 per cent). Own caste consideration counts for 18.3 per cent poor of which 28.0 per cent are rural and 12.4 per cent urban. Religion is the next consideration 10.0 per cent

Table 12 12

The poor's perception of the modern  
political leaders, in per cent

Qualities of the Modern Political Leaders	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Helpful and active	17 3	18 0	17.7
Selfish and corrupt	82 7	82 0	82 3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

Table 12 13

The qualities of the political leader, the poor keep in  
his mind while electing them, in per cent

Quality for Electing Political Leader	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
High socio-economic status	53 3	58 0	56 3
Own caste	28 0	12 4	18 3
Orator and honest	7 3	15 6	12 4
Own religion	10 0	4 8	6 7
Same locality	0 0	6 4	4 0
Manipulative capacity	1 4	2.8	2 3
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

rural and 4.8 per cent urban poor go in for leaders of their own religion. Next to it is the consideration of locality in selection of a leader, but it is applicable to urban poor exclusively. Interestingly, manipulative capacity of the leaders attract 2.8 per cent urban and 1.4 per cent rural poor. As against this, such qualities of a political leader as

oratory and honesty, are liked by 15.6 per cent urban and 7.3 per cent rural poor

This, then, shows that there is good contrast between ideal and actual levels in the choice of the leaders. At the ideal level, the poor want ideal qualities in the leaders both at self and other level. But when it comes to them to choose, they forget the ideal and act with the considerations of caste, religion, locality, manipulability, and socio-economic status of the leaders. There is, thus a gap between ideal and actual.

#### Attitude of the Poor towards Government

Finally we analysed the attitude of the poor towards the government both at the ideal and actual levels. Let us take the ideal first. Table 12.14 shows that the majority of the poor (62.0 per cent) feel that a good government is one which ensures law and order. This view is held more strongly by the urban than by the rural poor (72.4 vs. 44.7 per cent). Another criterion of a good government is that it must be democratic (21.3 per cent), here again, the urban poor outnumber the rural poor (23.2 vs. 18.0 per cent). The third criterion of a good government is that it must ensure bread and butter to the citizens (16.3 per cent). This view is held more strongly by the rural than by the urban poor (37.3 vs. 3.6 per cent). Authoritarian type of government is least liked by them both (0.8 per cent urban, zero per cent rural).

In summary, then, more urban than rural poor are of the view that an ideal government must be able to tackle law

Table 12 14

The poor's perception of an ideal government, in per cent

Perception of an Ideal Government	Rural Poor	Urban Poor	Rural + Urban Poor
Ensures law and order	44.7	72.4	62.0
Democratic	18.0	23.2	21.3
Ensures bread and butter	37.3	3.6	16.3
Authoritarian	0.0	0.8	0.4
Number of cases	(150)	(250)	(400)

and order problem and be democratic. For more rural than urban poor, the ideal government is one which ensures bread and butter

Let us now look how the poor view the present government. As data indicates, slightly over half of the sample population (50.5 per cent) holds that the present government is suitable for the country and the remaining half hold the opposite view. An interesting contrast appears between rural and urban poor when the two groups are compared. More rural than urban poor find the present government unsuitable (66.7 vs 39.2 per cent). Conversely, more urban than rural poor find the present government suitable (60.8 vs 33.3 per cent).

#### Case 13

Sukh Lal, 35 years old, belonging to a Brahmin caste comes from Naurangabad village. His main occupation is agriculture and his monthly income ranges between Rs. 100-150 a

month. In his family, there are six members. He feels that the poor have no time to involve themselves in politics. He further narrates that politics and power is restricted to rich people of society. He views politics as a game of dishonesty and tricks. Neither he belongs to any political party nor he participates in politics. However, he makes use of his voting power during elections.

#### Case 4

Shankar, 38 years, from a Tamoli caste belongs to Gwaltoli slum. He is involved in petty business and earns Rs. 160/- a month. He has to support a family of four members. He feels that these days power and politics are restricted to rich class. Poor are neglected because of their poverty, illiteracy and lack of manipulation. No one asks the opinion of poor people on any national affair. Only they are forced by goondas and dadas of political parties to use franchise during elections.

In conclusion, then, the majority of the poor are not members of any organization. And, of the small proportion who are members, they do not take their affiliation with the organizations seriously. The rural poor have less ties with these organization than the urban poor. Since most of the poor are working in the informal sector, they have no affiliation with labour unions as well.

The poor have very little or no contact with the political and bureaucratic elite. Whatever contacts are, they are very superficial merely talking or making applications.

Most of the poor have shown their leanings towards political parties, but they do not take active part in them. The poor nurture poor image of the political parties. For them, political parties can serve the purposes of monetary gain, social prestige and contacts. The poor are least interested in the national political affairs. The one area where the poor seem to be most active is the exercise of franchise during national elections.

There is a gap between the poor's perception of ideal and actual qualities of the political leaders. They themselves deviate much from their ideal stand during elections. In the poor's view, there is no match between the kind of government 'ought to be' and 'what it is'.

Our conclusions are, in a way, well-supported by Lewis' generalization. "People with a culture of poverty are provincial and locally oriented. . . they know only their own troubles, their local conditions, their neighbourhood. usually they do not have the knowledge, the vision, or the ideology to see similarities between their problems and those of their counterparts elsewhere . . . they are not class conscious. " (Lewis, 1966 XLVII)

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PART VI

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THE RESUME

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

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### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In what has gone before we analyzed the structural dimensions of poverty in rural and urban India in terms of its characteristics, consequences, and causation. There remain now only tasks of summarizing major conclusions and findings, and of tying together the main threads that run through our observations of poverty as a whole. In fact most of what we intend to say in this final chapter has been stated somewhere earlier. Here an attempt shall be made to draw the various themes together to clarify and interpret some of the major findings.

To begin with, the empirical basis of our analysis consists of data collected from six selected slum areas of Kanpur city and five contiguous villages of Kanpur Nagar district of the Indian State of Uttar Pradesh. The data has been drawn mainly from interviews conducted in the area, and partly from secondary sources. The area has no claim to be representative of either Uttar Pradesh or India, and, therefore, it must be borne in mind that the conclusions we arrive at and the relationships we identify relate to a specific location and to a specific society. However, the sample has been drawn with an eye to encompass a wider section of the poor population and the areas studied do cover a wide range of living conditions of the poor — from

the village to the city and from the poor to the poorest among the poor. While the characteristics of poverty and its generation and implications may show regional variation within India, there is little doubt that many fundamental elements remain the same. Much of the analysis is, therefore, likely to be valid beyond the boundaries of the area studied.

In the belief that a clear-cut conceptualization of poverty is desideratum for its empirical analysis, we introduced the notion of poverty at the earliest possible opportunity, namely, in Chapter one of Part I Preliminaries, in order that selection and treatment of vast array of poverty might be easily fitted into the overall pattern of this inquiry.

The term 'poverty' is a vague and value-loaded term, which means different things in different cultures at different levels of socio-economic development at different historical points. There is a long tradition of debate as to whether poverty is absolute or relative, whether it is subjective or objective. The absolute approach tries to define poverty in relation to human physiology and in terms of subsistence levels of nutrition. The relative approach attempts to define poverty in relation to society, primarily in terms of the distance between the poor and the average or median standard of living in society. Whereas an absolute definition of poverty tends to limit attention to those below the poverty line and easily confines the study of poverty to

a study of the poor, a relative definition tends to make the study of poverty one aspect of the study of inequality and draws attention to the difficulties involved in reducing poverty, increasing the realism in understanding the causes of poverty, and to design and evaluate programmes against poverty. Although the relative definition of poverty was favoured, yet for empirical analysis, both absolute and relative criteria were relied upon.

It is held that the poverty has a multi-variate nature, so the single variable approach is considered inadequate for its proper understanding. That is to say, the poverty is not something which is readily identifiable by a certain number of rupees per month or calorie-intake per diet. At best, they give a proxy for certain aspects of poverty and omit many other important facets of the problem. For analytical purposes, the poverty has been defined as a vector of satisfactions and deprivations involving many diverse elements — economic, social, political, demographic, and cultural. The components that constitute the vector of poverty, have, of course, been subject to considerable debate. However, various components that make up a poverty vector can only be discerned in a specific context, many of which can be quantified but many others can only be qualitatively treated. This conceptualization of poverty enabled us to measure the extent of poverty as well as to ascertain the policies affecting the extent of poverty. A look at the types of poverty further suggested that there is not one, but varieties of, poor.

The study has an exploratory-cum-descriptive research design. The sample has been drawn through stratified random sampling. The study is based on a sample of 20.0 per cent of the heads of the households of the urban slum localities and villages selected. The final sample consists of 150 rural and 250 urban poor.

Three broad categories of methods were adopted for the analysis of poverty: (1) quantitative (documentary facts and statistical analysis of the empirical data) and qualitative (interview, case study, and observation), (2) inductive technique such as Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) to identify the dependency and causality, and (3) systems perspective to understand the relationship governing the behaviour of poverty system as a whole.

The important independent variables selected for the study are contextual background, caste, income, occupation, and education.

There are three fundamental perspectives explaining the causes of poverty (underdevelopment) and/or affluence (development): (1) social-structural perspectives arguing from two different positions, conflict and functionalist, both seeking to explain increasing differentiation of societies in terms of social structures and processes within society and emphasize organizational and institutional determinants of poverty; (2) social-psychological perspective emphasizes personality determinants of poverty; and (3) the world-systems perspective emphasizes international structures and processes in explaining underdevelopment of societies. The first two perspectives

are ontogenetic theories in the sense that they call attention to the causes internal to the society and its members, whereas the last one is phylogenetic in the sense that it lays stress on determinants external to the society and its members (for detailed account, see Armer and Issac, 1978 316-317, Portes, 1976 55-85, Frank, 1967 20-73, Pandey, 1982 37-51) The study has adopted the structural perspective to understand how the social structures and processes within the society determine the poverty. Nevertheless, it believes in the world-systems perspective, which is well demonstrated by the historical account of the underdevelopment of Kanpur city and region, briefly reviewed in Chapter Three.

While surveying the socio-economic development of Kanpur, the entire historical development was divided into pre-independence and post-independence periods. If our analysis proceeded correctly, it would have become evident that the industrial development in Kanpur took place along with the increase of the immiserization of the masses. Precisely put, the processes of industrialization and immiserization occurred simultaneously. The industrial development, that took place in Kanpur city, was, in fact, not the 'development or development', but, what Franks aptly terms, the 'development of underdevelopment' (Frank, 1966 17-31). During the imperial rule, all the developments were, what dependencia school calls, "associated dependent development" (Cardoso, 1973, Evans, 1979, Leys, 1975). The industrial development in British India was merely a form of economic exploitation (on few historical subjects there is so wide agreement among

scholars of diverse orientations see Anstey, 1929, Digby, 1901, Dutt, 1949 32, Nehrū, 1946, Baran, 1962, Frank, 1978). The transfer of power in 1947 was, of course, a break in Indian history creating a different context — the context of independent national state. However, even in the post-independent India, the ruling and capitalist classes combined together to exploit the situation in their favour. Not surprising, that there emerged a large number of labour colonies and slum areas in Kanpur city and the hinterlands. Sociologically, the most industrialized city of Kanpur is also the most desperately backward of all Indian cities from the socio-cultural and economic point of view.

This inquiry has a three-fold objective one, to define the components that constitute the vector of poverty in rural and urban India, two, to analyse the way poverty is generated, and, finally, to find out the consequences of poverty. Severally, these three objectives refer to the components, causation, and consequences of poverty and, jointly, they indicate the structural dimensions of poverty.

In all, four major groups of variables characteristic of poverty have been discerned (a) economic components (1) occupation, (2) income; (b) basic need components (3) food, and (4) shelter, (c) resource components (5) health, and (6) education, and (d) socio-cultural components (7) demographic features, (8) values, interests, and activities, and (9) politics and power. These nine components, which constitute the vector of poverty, have been taken on the assumption that man's physiological needs such as food and

nutrition, shelter, preventive and protective health care, primary education, etc., must be fulfilled. And, for fulfilling these requirements there must be a minimum income. Besides, or so to speak, above these needs, there are social and affiliative needs, that must be satisfied.

Our major hypothesis is that the structural background of the rural and urban areas does make a difference between the poverty in terms of components, causation, and consequences. The specific hypotheses are (1) that the rural poor are likely to have less income, assets, and occupational opportunities as compared to the urban poor, (2) that the rural poor tend to take less nutritional diet and live in better shelter than that of the urban poor, (3) that the urban poor are likely to be at an advantageous position in terms of educational and health facilities as compared to their rural counterparts, and (4) that the rural poor families are likely to be larger, more conservative, and less active in politics than that of the urban poor.

Let us now turn our attention to the characteristics, causation, and consequences of poverty. In the economic component of poverty, our focus was mainly on the occupation, and income and assets of the poor. The occupation tells us the place the poor occupy in the division of labour in society and the income they earn. The findings reveal that the poor are, by and large, wage labour irrespective of their contextual background (99.0 per cent rural, 92.0 per cent urban, and 92.2 per cent as a whole). The one distinction between the two groups of the poor is that the rural poor

are agricultural and the urban poor non-agricultural wage labour. In both the groups of the poor, a small proportion is self employed as petty shopkeepers although the urban poor outnumber the rural poor. A small proportion of the urban poor (0.4 per cent) are salary earners, whereas there is none so among the rural poor. The hypothesis that the urban poor tend to have more job opportunities than that of their rural counterparts is sustained. However, the urban poor are more not gainfully employed than the rural poor. The nature of the occupations the poor are engaged in is temporary, seasonal, or daily-wage. The vertical occupational mobility for them is practically non-existent. There is horizontal occupational mobility to some extent but the nature and kind of jobs remain more or less identical. The spatial mobility for the poor proves very costly. Whenever and wherever they migrate in search of a lucrative and better job, they meet utter frustrations. The only potential sources of the poor's placement are acquaintances and relatives. The poor have to pay bribe in order to get the poor job. The threat of survival compels them to reconcile with the adage "something is better than nothing". They feel satisfied with the jobs they do.

Let us pause to give a close look at the nature of occupations of the poor. It transpires that the poor live mainly by selling their labour power (see Diagram 13.1). To some it may appear that some individuals do have choice as to the persons or institutions to which they sell their labour power. But they work in a system of wage labour in

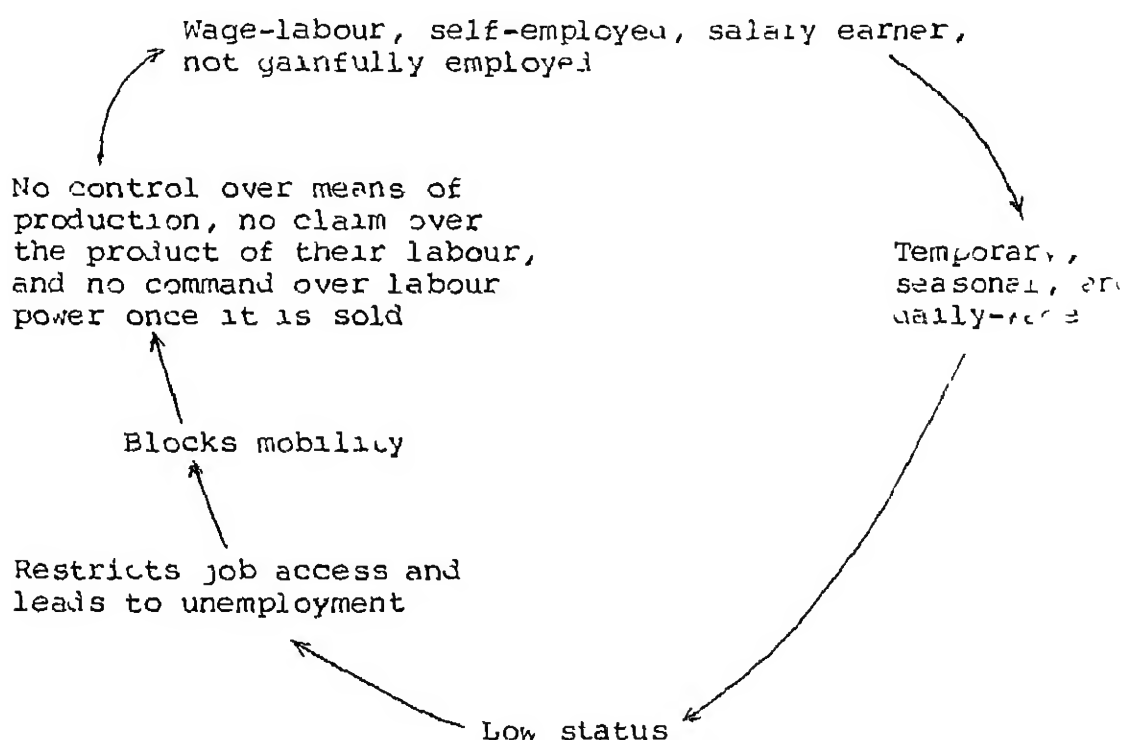
which others command their labour power. Furthermore, as most of the poor work in an informal sector, their wages are also less clearly determined. The temporary nature of job and the lack of control over it render the poor destitute and forces them to submit to every demand or lose their livelihood. Perhaps it was this that made Marx to write "he (labour) has no work, hence no wages, and since he has no existence as a human being but only as a worker, he can go and bury himself, starve to death, etc." (Marx, n.d., III 283). What the poor can do is that they sell their labour power over and over again. In return for his continued physical existence, the poor are compelled to repeatedly sell their labour power and once the labour is sold, the poor lose control over it and receive a sum of money in return. The poor no longer are allowed to exert their will over their own labour. They are, thus, forced to sell their labour power and to give up their command over it once it is sold. Even if the term of employment is attractive, the principal condition does not change. To quote Marx once again, "The raising of wages excites in the worker the capitalists' mania to get rich, which he, however, can only satisfy by the sacrifice of his mind and body" (Marx, n.d., 3.238).

Another implication of the wage labour is that the poor do not produce their sustenance directly. Nor does they own the means to do so. Their only asset is their labour power. The poor, thus, lack the means to transform and manipulate nature in the process of production. Also, they have no claim to the product of their labour. For the labour power

expanded, they are compensated with a sum of money, a wage. The distribution system does not favour them.

Diagram 13.1

Occupation of the Poor and Its Implications



The occupation of the poor determine their place in the stratification of the society, it puts them at the lowest rung of the hierarchical ladder. Since the poor tend to be wage labourers, small peasants or otherwise self-employed with relatively few complementary assets, they have no participation in, and control over, decisions in the production process. Furthermore, the poor being employed largely in the informal sector, lack the bargaining power

for want of organization. The mechanism by which wages are set are arbitrary and the conditions under which the poor work are inhuman. Since a large number of poor are engaged in jobs like domestic servant, wage labour, vendor, etc., it can be described, even if cruelly, a process of 'Lumpenization', closely related to the process of marginalization. The low status of the poor restricts job access. The low status jobs coupled with low incomes lead to insecurity which conjointly force the poor to accept forms of bonding or undesirable working environments, often leading to health hazards, to lower wages, and to a reduction in bargaining power.

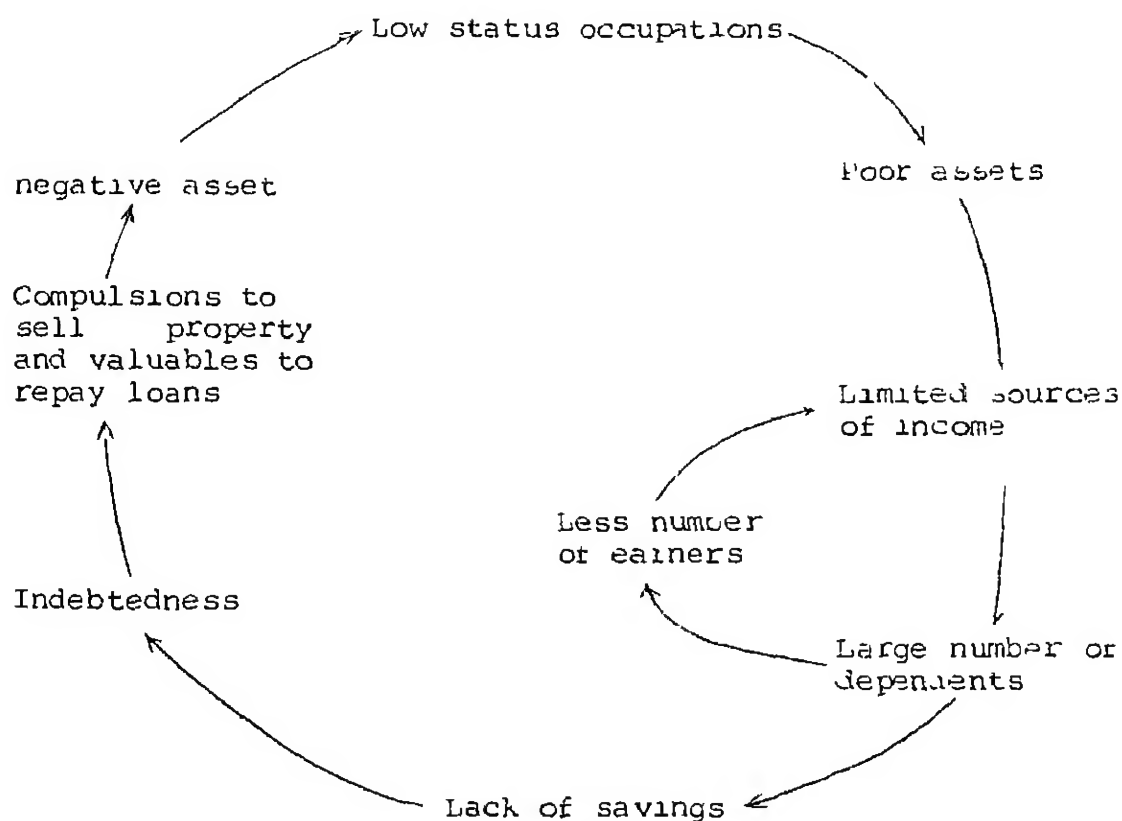
The poor are engaged in these occupations not because they want them but because they do not have any other alternative means of livelihood. And, the earning from these occupations remains insufficient to meet both ends. So many of them do engage in some supplementary jobs, but the income accruing from these jobs is meagre. The chances of occupational mobility is bleak. As the poor's occupations are of low status, their class position is lowered, which, in turn, restricts their job access and results in high degree of unemployment in their families. Naturally, therefore, the educated members of the poor's families suffer from unemployment.

There is a positive relationship between income, education and caste, and the occupations of the poor.

Our analysis of the poor's income and assets gives interesting results (see Diagram 13.2). The income of the

Diagram 13 2

## Income Components of Poverty and Its Implications



majority of the poor (79.7 per cent) fall in the income bracket of Rs. 100-300 per mensem. The average monthly income is Rs. 197.3 in rural and Rs. 269.6 in urban areas. This comes to Rs. 26.3 per capita in rural areas and Rs. 55.0 per capita in urban areas. This shows that the poor are far behind the minimum monthly income suggested by Planning Commission which is Rs. 80 in rural and Rs. 100 in urban

areas at 1981 beginning prices<sup>1</sup> All this speaks of the abject poverty of the poor<sup>1</sup>

In most of the households, there is no other earner than the head of the household (76.8 per cent). The child labour is a harsh reality in the poor's families. The poor feel that their low income is because of the fact that they have limited sources of income (80.7 per cent rural, 29.2 per cent urban), that their earnings is insufficient (6.0 per cent rural, and 49.2 per cent urban), and that they have to sustain a large number of dependents (1.3 per cent rural, 14.4 per cent urban) with the low wages they earn.

Besides wages, the income accrues from assets, for, the latter is the source of rent, interest, and profits. Therefore, the question of assets was also examined in terms of tangible reproducible wealth such as house owned, land, and livestock, and intangible reproducible wealth such as bank deposits, insurance, securities, etc.

The only important tangible reproducible wealth which may be considered as means of production over which many of the poor have some control is the land with some associated farm implements and animals. The analysis of the ownership of land, its distribution, and its dynamics reveals that

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. The Perspective Planning Division of the Planning Commission in 1962 recommended a minimum monthly income of Rs. 100 at 1961 prices for a household of five persons in rural areas and Rs. 125 in urban areas. This comes to Rs. 20 per capita in rural areas and Rs. 25 per capita in urban areas at 1961 prices. Rs. 20 in 1961 prices is equivalent to Rs. 80 in 1981 beginning prices. In other words, per capita consumption at 1981 beginning prices has to be Rs. 80 in rural areas and Rs. 100 in urban areas. This minimum income was meant to

unequal access to land is the rule in the villages. This is clearly a major determinant of poverty in rural areas. The rural poor either own very little land or are share-croppers, or landless agricultural wage-labour. The farm power and livestock is also minimal. This reflects that the poor have a marginal and insecure control over peripheral means of production, or, more commonly, they have none at all. The urban poor even lack all these, only asset of them being their labour power.

A close look at the poor's intangible reproducible wealth in terms of bank deposits, securities, life-insurances, etc., reveals that their saving is negligible. Only a small proportion of the urban poor are able to save a little (47.2 per cent). Their low earning and savings frequently increase indebtedness and end in the loss of any assets possessed.

Assets are not only an income source but also a source of security, control, and status. Asset holdings provide security against economic fluctuations as well as income and unemployment opportunities. Furthermore, wealth, and the way in which it is displayed, serves as an important aspect of status hierarchy. The only permanent asset of the poor, as said earlier, is their labour power but no sooner they decide not to sell it, they inevitably meet starvation and liquidation. In the rural areas, it seems, the poor who were once relatively self-sufficient farmers even at subsistence level, have been systematically and gradually displaced and separated from land without being able to find any other means of livelihood.

The economic condition of both the poor groups is miserable. However, our hypothesis that the urban poor are in somewhat advantageous position in terms of income and assets as compared with their rural counterparts (Ol level) is sustained.

The occupation, income, and assets interact together. The poor are engaged mainly in low status occupations which carry low income. When the occupation is of low status and income is low, it blocks the capital accumulation (see Diagram 13.2). There is negative savings. In order to meet their needs the poor incur debts. Most often they had to sell their dead property and valuables to repay the loan. Low income and poor assets force them to accept forms of bonding or undesirable work environment, leading to lower wages, and reduction in bargaining strength. The lack of asset holding is fundamental to the generation of poverty. Assets provide income directly, generate self-employment, and give measure of security. Since the poor lack assets, they lack income, and suffer from unemployment and insecurity. Asset holding in terms of education, skills, and abilities, i.e., human capital, is also negligible.

In the need component of poverty we have focussed on food, cloth and shelter and some other necessities. There are two classifications of human needs that are of particular importance for conception of social justice. One is a distinction between "basic" and "non-basic" needs, the other, a distinction between 'genuine' and 'false' needs. We believe that the community has a duty to satisfy (or help satisfy) certain

basic human needs of those who, for various reasons, are unable to take care of themselves. A list of needs considered as basic is, of course, relative and depends on circumstances of time and place, different needs are viewed as 'basic' in India and in the United States (Benn and Peters, 1959 146). Considered in general terms, they are usually defined as those needs that are directly related to physical survival and to the most elementary conditions of a meaningful life in a society. Generally there is agreement about what needs are most basic, but it is almost impossible to define the modes of application of 'higher', non-basic needs, such as the need for leisure, self-realization, satisfaction, and cultural self-development. The distinction between objective needs and purely subjective wants<sup>2</sup> is linked with the distinction between so-called "true" and "false" needs. "Where the needs in question are also "true needs" or "genuine needs", we are speaking . . . of needs which answer to the pervasive interests of human beings. True needs answer to such interests, false needs do not, rather false needs are those things that people come to want and feel they must have as a result of social stimulation and ideological indoctrination and would not otherwise feel such . . . attachment to or concern about" (Nielsen, 1977 44-45),

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<sup>2</sup>A distinction between "needs" and "wants" is generally accepted in the modern literature about a theory of needs, one of the essential criteria of this distinction is that needs are determined not only by the fact that they are felt by someone, but in addition (or even independently), by some objective tests (Cf. Eckhoff, 1974.220, Miller, 1976.129).

Food intakes and their distribution over the population are the significant variables available for the study of absolute poverty. There are two aspects of food-requirement: minimum food requirement sufficient to maintain life and nothing else, and calorie requirements representing the needs of fully healthy individuals. Whereas the former is sufficient enough to survive, the latter enables people to live an active life, physiologically, mentally, and socially, and to be highly productive in their occupational pursuits (FAO, 1957: 6).

In India, the estimates have been made of calorie-requirements by age and sex (see ICMR, 1966). The mean requirement of calorie ranges from 2400 in the age group 19-29, 2325 in 30-39, 2255 in 40-49, and 2075 in 50-59. These figures are sufficiently meaningful for sensible comparisons to be made between these requirements and actual or potential calorie intakes among the poor groups of rural and urban Kanpur areas. The primary interview data indicate that the main food items of the poor are raw grains such as wheat, rough cereals, barley, etc. The consumptions of the milk, eggs and fat is seldom. And if all income of the poor was devoted to a cereal-dal diet, on an average only about 39.7 per cent of these calorie recommendations would be satisfied for the poor households. Moreover, these estimates hide three important factors: one, some expenditure on non-calorie food and other commodities is essential. Two, the intra-household consumption does not necessarily coincide with the

recommended intakes. Three, seasonal fluctuations in income and prices lead to substantial lower food intakes at certain times of the year.

To be more exact, in our sample the rural poor receive 206 gms and the urban poor 300 gms food grains daily and the calorie obtained from the same is 716 and 1041, respectively. This shows that both rural and urban poor fail even to approach recommended standards, and many households and individuals are far below even this average. The hypothesis that urban poor take nutritious diet than that of the rural poor does not find support from our data.

Not only that the poor suffer from malnutrition but also lack proper clothing in different seasons of the year and thus fail to protect themselves from hazard elements. They spend very less on various other necessities such as travel (zero per cent rural, 16.2 per cent urban), postage (zero per cent rural, 4.4 per cent urban), and entertainment (0.6 per cent rural, 10.4 per cent urban). The expenditure on addiction among both the groups, is, relatively substantial.

The implications of this situation are many (see Diagram 13.3). First, there is reduction in the body weight. Secondly, there is higher susceptibility to disease. Thirdly, there is reduction in work activity and their work productivity is reduced. And, if the villages and slums from where the data were gathered are at all representative of the poor population, then for a substantial proportion of the population of this area monotonous diet of the most basic foodstuffs, is a normal and continuous part of life.

Studies have shown that most Indian dietaries which are protein-deficient are also calorie deficient, and that an increase in dietary intake to adequate calorie levels, without major change in diet pattern, would also lead to adequacy in protein intake (Sukhatme, 1969 2170-2185, 1970 477-485). So there is obvious protein deficiency in the poor. A number of other nutrients are required by the body-- calcium, iron, a variety of vitamins and so on. These nutrients frequently come from specific types of consumption such as calcium from milk, vitamin C from fresh fruits and vegetables — which need be included in the consumption pattern. Our data shows that these consumption patterns account for only a relatively small proportion of the poor. And cereals, substitutes and pulses account for from 2 to 3 times as much expenditure as all other food combined among the poor strata. Certain nutrients are available to some extent in basic cereals, dal mixtures, but it is not significant.

The consumption pattern of the poor, then, shows that their diet contain very low nutritional element. The poor consumption is mainly because of their low income generated by their low status occupation. The poor level of food consumption further leads to ill-health and poverty, which, in turn, leads to more expenditure on health, more absence from work and lower income (see Diagram 13.3).

The average consumption of food items like wheat, rice, and rough cereals per person per day is 117 gms., 55 gms., and 50 gms., respectively. According to the present market prices, the value of rice is Rs. 3.00 per Kg., of wheat

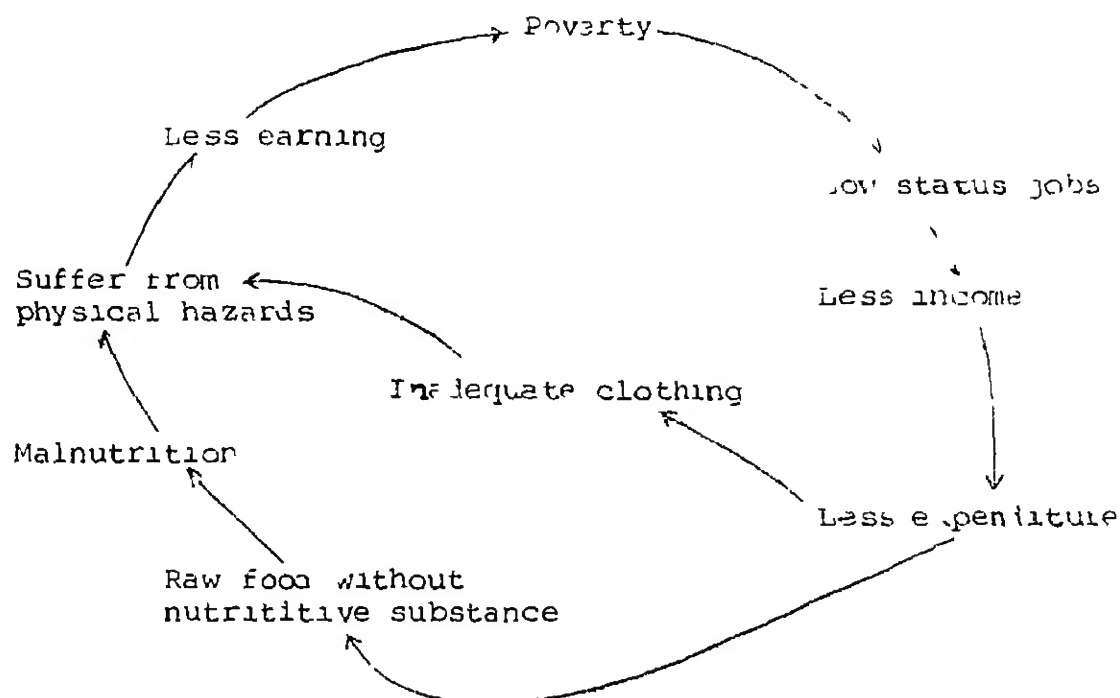
Rs 2.00 per Kg, and of rough cereals Rs 1.75 per Kg. This shows that poor spend Rs 0.30 on meat, Rs 0.25 on rice, and Rs 0.20 on rough cereals. In other words, on an average the poor spend Rs. 1.15, if the expenditure on other necessary items like pulses, vegetables, fuel, salt, and oil are added to cereals. It means that annual per capita expenditure will be at the order of Rs. 414/- Needless to say, a person will not be able to consume any amount of protein (e.g., egg, milk, etc.) other than cereals alone against this expenditure. That is, the expenditure of Rs. 414/- is his minimum consumption need for survival. The minimum requirement of an individual per year in the early 1940s on food alone was calculated as Rs. 40.00 by Mukherjee (1971:156), and Rs. 630.00 in 1970s by Chattopadhyay (1982:34).

Besides the expenses on food, a person has to meet the expenses on clothing. It is reported that per capita yearly expenditure on clothing is Rs. 40/-. According to the early 1940s information, the per capita amount so required on dresses was Rs. 10/- (Mukherjee, 1971:156), while in 1970s it was Rs. 45/- (Chattopadhyay, 1982:34). Taking food and clothing expenses together, it is thus seen that per capita amount required for these two would be Rs. 454/- in the 1982, while it was Rs. 675/- in the 1970s and Rs. 50/- in the early 1940s. All this shows that the poor are not able to meet their basic need like food and clothing.

Most of the poor (36.5 per cent) do not own a shelter for them. The houses owned are mainly Kachcha, mud-and-hut

Diagram 13 3

## Food Consumption and Its Implications



type The majority of the poor in rural areas dwell in grass and bamboo huts. The minimum is a roof, and no more. The poor generally gather most materials for themselves and construct their houses. The main real costs involved are the poor's own time and effort, the cost of any material purchased, and the land on which the house stands. Some otherwise landless poor own their house sites, but in many cases the ownership of the house site is one element in the interplay of feudal landlord-labourer relationships. Facilities such as toilets, safe drinking water, and electricity are not to be found in the houses of the poor. In urban areas, the poor own no site of their houses. They

squat on any public place, or old buildings or open space. The scrap material, rags, tarpolin, and mud are the main materials to construct the houses.

The houses poor live<sup>in</sup> are mainly one-roomed. Over-crowding and congestion are the prime characteristics of these houses. The one-room houses serve multipurposes of the poor to cook, to store, and to do all chores of life. There is no ventilation in these houses, and the sun-light seldom reach. They lack other basic amenities such as latrines and water which add physical hazards to the lives of the poor. Some of the poor do nurture aspiration for a house but they know fullwell that they will never be able to own a house owing to the economic constraints.

The ownership pattern of the houses by the poor is positively associated with the occupation, income and caste, while there is negative association with the education. The expenditure pattern reveals that 70.0 per cent of income goes on food, 8.4 per cent on clothing, 2.8 per cent on housing and the remainder on a number of minor commodities such as health, education, entertainment, addiction, etc. These proportions of expenditure pattern reflect real relative needs. The poor's perceptions of their own needs transpire from their consumption patterns.<sup>3</sup> Food consumption is several times more important in terms of resources allocated

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<sup>3</sup>This methodology was adopted by Rowntree in York at the beginning of the century (See Rowntree, 1901).

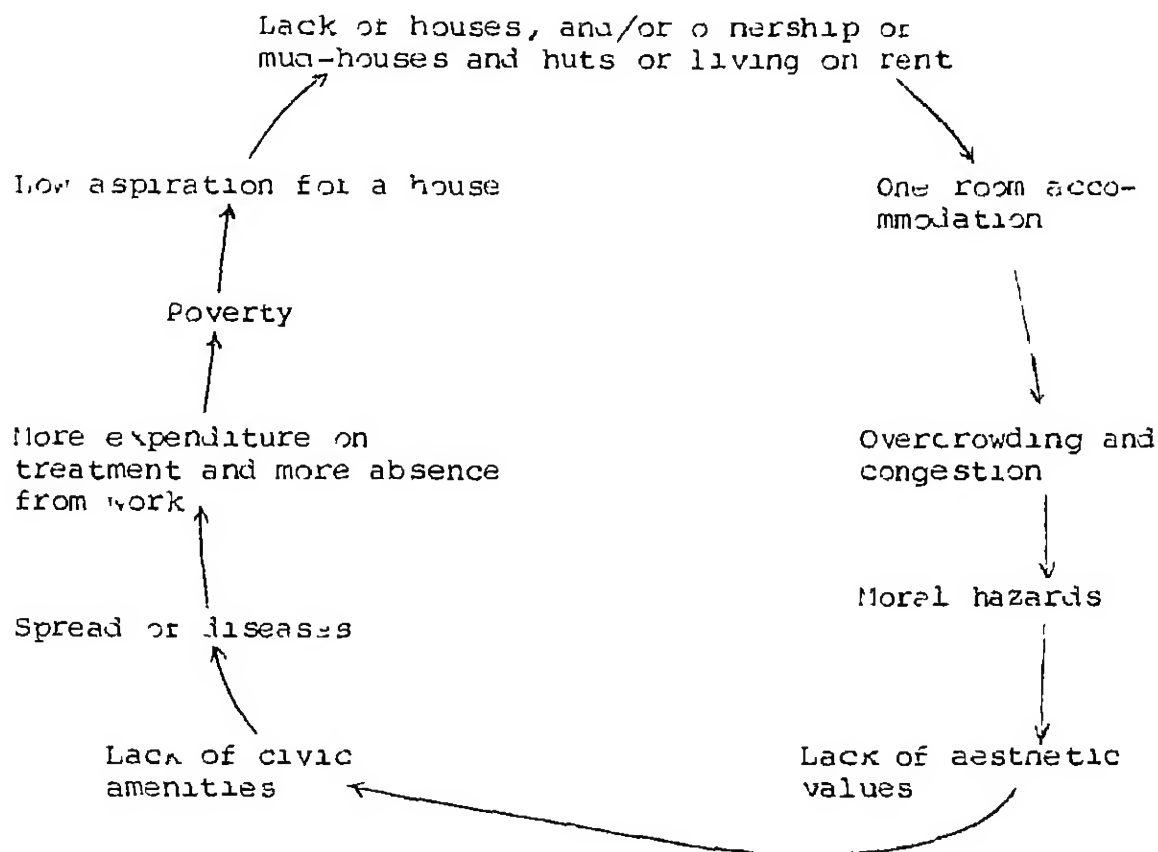
to it than non-food consumption, and the latter must, therefore, have a smaller weight in the conceptualization of poverty (see Diagram 13.4).

Most of the poor live in one-room tenement, mud houses and/or hutments. To maintain this shelter amenable for living, each household incurs some expenditure on rent, repairing, etc. The annual per household expenditure comes to Rs. 25.00 and per capita expenditure to Rs. 4.15. During 1940s, per capita amount required on these items was calculated to be about Rs. 2.00 and during 1970s Rs. 30.00. This, then, shows the acute poverty of the poor as they spend very little on their shelter.

The poor do not own a house and live in a non-human condition because their income is meagre as also because the capital accumulation is low. The lack of shelter and the kind of houses the poor live in have far reaching implications. The poor housing is a perennial threat to the health of the family members. The earning goes toward treatment, which, in turn, makes them poor. More hazards resulting from the shelter lead to the social degradation and low status. The congestion and overcrowding lead to moral hazards. The lack of civic amenities is associated with the spread of diseases. All this adversely affects the personality, physique and morality of the poor. The non-basic needs are, of course, not the survival factors; nevertheless, they must be met, but the poor fail to meet them.

Diagram 13.4

## Implications of Shelter of the Poor



Among the resource component of the poverty were included health and education. Let us take health first.

Most of the poor (52.3 per cent) go in for allopathic medicines, but there is an inadequate medical structure for that. The poor avoid going to the civil hospitals, for, they had to wait for long and, in this process, their day's earning is lost. Furthermore, they feel neglected by the physicians working in government hospitals. Much against their wishes, they had to consult private practitioner. But they prove costly. Consequently, they fall prey to quacks.

and herbalists. Although the lack of medical facilities characterize both rural areas and urban slums, the urban areas are in somewhat advantageous position as compared to the rural areas in so far as the existence of the medicare is concerned.

Many debilitating diseases are widespread. Some are caused due to inability to protect themselves from the climates. Other diseases are caused due to malnutrition and bad housing condition including poor milieu.

The poor, by and large, confront difficulties in getting proper treatment due to high cost of medicines, high fee charged by the physicians, low income, lack of medical facilities, and apathy of the medical officials.

The extent of poverty can be gauged by the fact that most of the poor (31.7 per cent) are unable to provide even sick-leave to the needy.

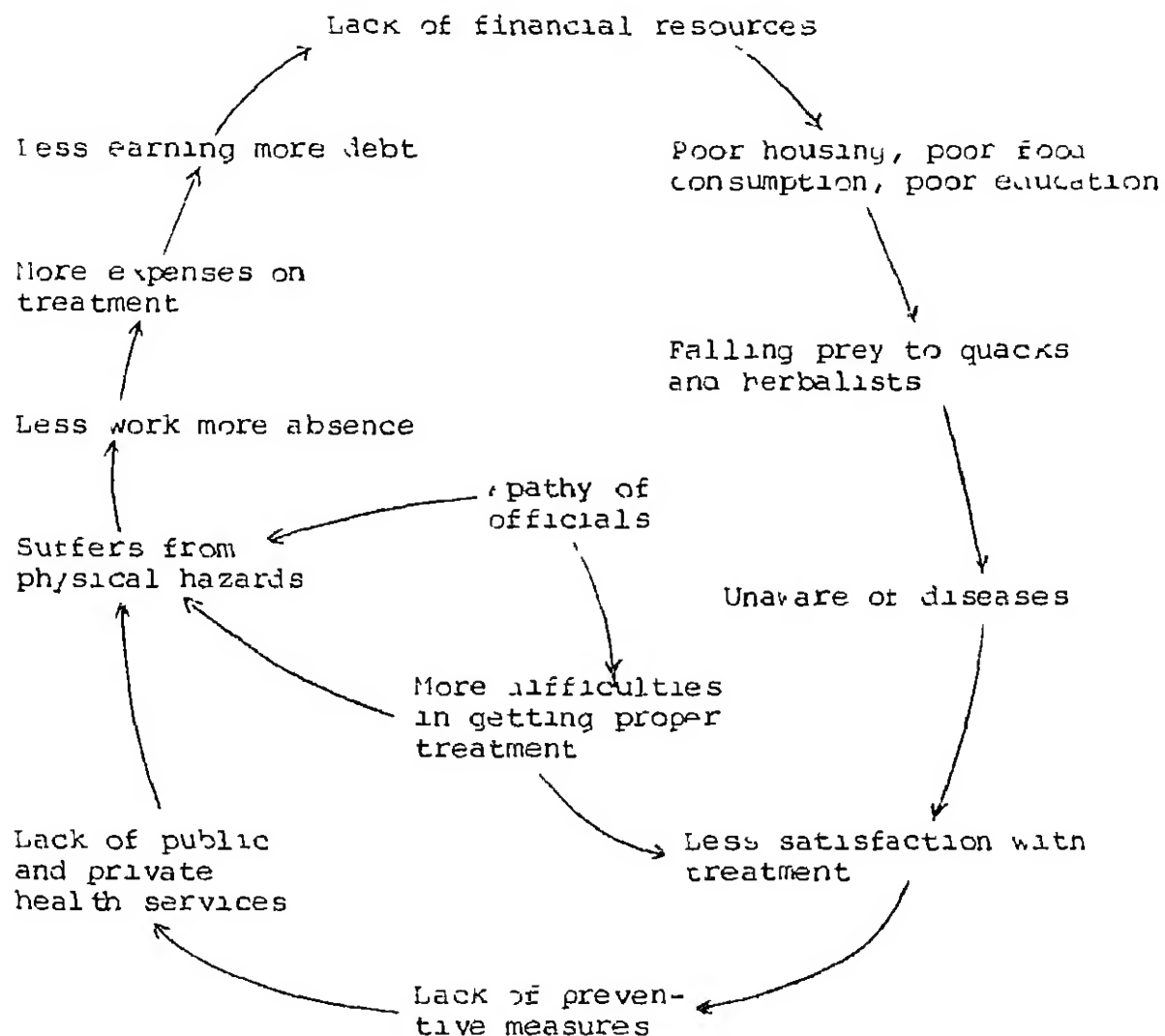
Due to illiteracy, the poor are little aware of the diseases they themselves are prey and of the diseases that are widespread in their localities. As are medical officials so are the poor in neglecting preventive measures such as inoculation and immunization. The problem of personal and public hygiene is serious. Not only that understaffing of medical services is chronic, but corruption is also rampant.

The interaction between ill-health and other components of poverty is both substantial and serious. The low level of food intake makes the poor susceptible to a variety of infectious diseases, many of which, in turn, reduce nutrient absorption (see Scrimshaw et al., 1968). Poor health reduces

adequate participation in the labour force and affects productivity of those who work. The low food consumption is the result of low income and poor assets which leads to poor nutrition, ill-health, and further reduction in income. The health interacts with the security of the poor; the illness or death of principal or other earning members of a household prove catastrophic, particularly when there is no alternative source of income. Many of the diseases are caused by the insanitary conditions of the houses and locality. And, the bad housing, ill-health, and poor food consumption are the result of low income, which, affects not only the productivity but also the income of the poor. The low level of education affects the poor's conception of health and hygiene — public and personal, they remain ignorant about the diseases they suffer from as also about the diseases that are rampant in the localities they live in. It is also a cause of being negligent towards preventive measures and/or running after quacks and herbalists than trained medical practitioner. Thus the health is associated with other components of poverty in a subtle manner (see Diagram 13.5)

In order to maintain a healthy living, it is necessary to meet the medical expenses. The poor incur Rs. 0.96 per person per year. The expenses on medicine was of an order of Re. 1.00 during early 1940s and Rs. 15.00 per person per year during 1970s. This reflects how poor are the poor as they are unable to meet expenses on proper medicare — an important need of human being.

Diagram 13 5  
Health and Its Implications



Coming to the next resource component — education  
Our data shows that the majority of the poor (34.5 per cent) are illiterate or bare literate, irrespective of the contextual background. However, the urban poor have an edge over the rural poor in terms of education. A look at the inter-generational mobility reveals that the head of the households

are hardly better than their parents and the educational achievement of their offsprings is marginally better. The analysis of education between three generations reveals a dismal picture.

Furthermore, there is lack of vocational training and educational facilities in the areas the poor live in. Its aftermath is that there is low generation of educational motives among the poor and the level of education and of skills generated remain too low to enable them to find jobs in the new industries and tertiary sector enterprises that have come in past decades or so in that region.

For the uneducated wage earner, who sees the future of his own family as labourers, or, at best, as small cultivators, education must seem a very dubious commodity. The problem is further aggravated when there is 'educated unemployment' in their families particularly because they do not have contacts required to find a white-collar job. This further compels the poor to withdraw their attention from education. The child of the poor is apt to see the futility of education in a second rate educational system for it does not pay off in case of educated members in the family. And, if this is looked from the viewpoint of family income that the child could make if he did not go to school, the low level of education of the poor is perhaps not surprising. A group of the poor does nurture aspirations for children's education, but the poverty becomes a limiting factor in setting the goals.

The hypothesis that urban poor are likely to be more educated than the rural poor is not sustained by our data. There is almost similarity between the two groups of poor in terms of education.

The income of the poor is so low that they cannot afford the costs involved in getting education. Since children in the family add to the family's meagre income, they are less encouraged to go to school. The educated unemployment affects the aspirations of the poor for education. Since education is low, they have less chances of better employment, income, and status. The low aspiration for education blocks both educational and occupational mobility (see Diagram 13.6).

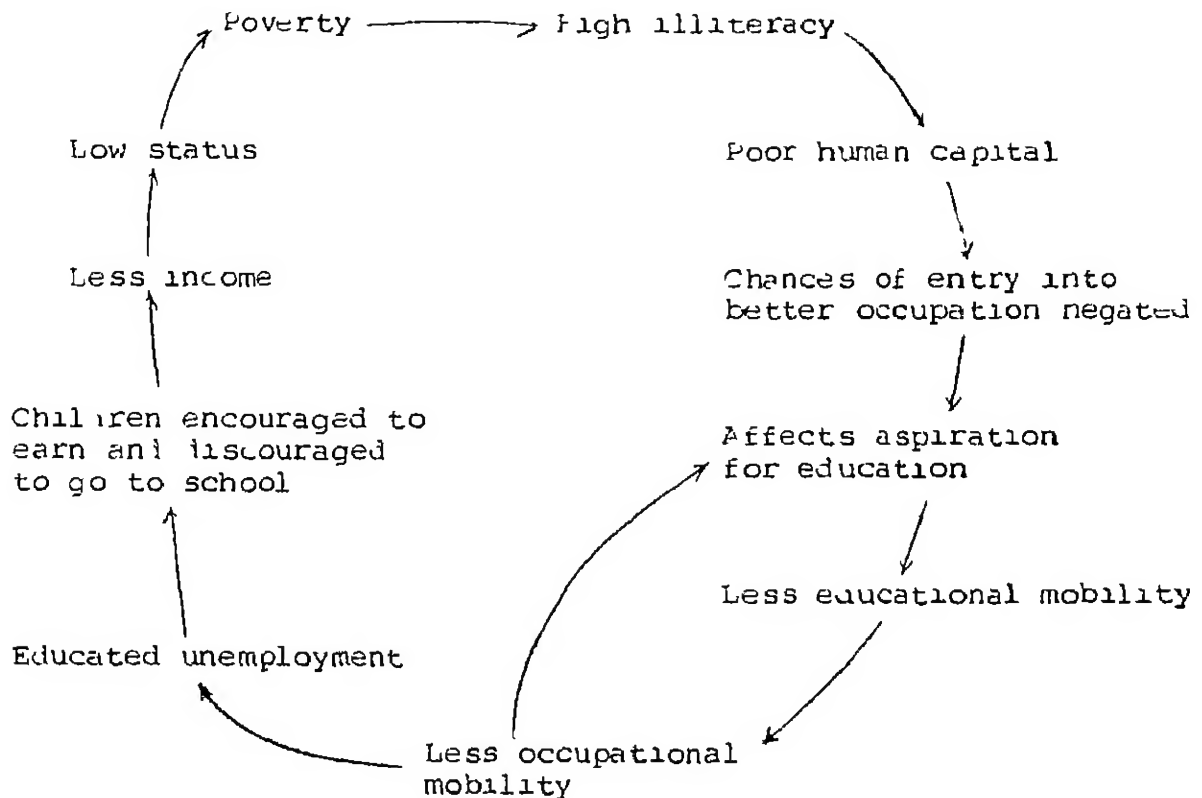
The poor's illiteracy has resulted into low status occupation and low income. The educational level itself is affected by their occupation, income, unemployment, values, etc. Due to low level of education there is lack of information regarding diseases.

Each family has some educational expenses, particularly for the primary school-going children. The per capita expenditure on education of such children in each family comes to Rs. 1.56 per year. An average expenditure on education is reported to be Rs. 20.00 in 1970s by Chattopadhyay (1982:35). If our data is compared with this, the poor's expenditure on education is negligible.

In socio-cultural component of poverty were analysed the demographic features, values, interests and activities, and politics and power.

Diagram 13 o

## Education of the Poor and Its Implications



Let us take the demographic features first. Our sample is represented by Hindus. Among the Hindus, the Backward Class and Scheduled Castes are in majority and higher castes in minority. This reflects that the majority of the poor belong to the Backward Class and Scheduled Caste. It is worth mentioning that the Government of India has long recognized that low status in caste hierarchy in itself, and particularly untouchables, is a form of poverty and has drawn up a list of those castes meriting special assistance, e.g., in housing programmes, or in job opportunities. The

caste system as a whole tends to rigidity income differentials in India by restricting certain assets and skills to particular groups or the population (Svaminathan, quoted in Clark, 1963). The Scheduled Castes at the bottom of hierarchy, are predominantly agricultural labourers in villages and non-agricultural wage earners in the city. Obviously, the participation in the work force is higher among the Scheduled Castes than among the high castes. The educational level of the Scheduled Caste is low, asset holding is minimal, and, where the Scheduled Castes are cultivators, they have small land holdings. Also, the indebtedness is found to be higher among them.

The majority of the poor belong to the joint family (64.2 per cent) and the size of their families is large consisting of 5 to 7 and more members. The rural poor's families are larger than that of the urban poor's families. More rural than urban poor show their preference for joint families. Our findings tend to challenge some widely prevalent notions about lower-class fertility attitudes that the poor express a consistent desire to have a few children as, or fewer than, those of higher socio-economic status (For such studies, see Jaffe, 1966 335-341). As our primary data shows, the poor want many children and do not care how many they have (Cf., Stykos, 1963). If urban poor show preference for small families, it must be borne in mind that wish is not quite the deed. However, the fact remains that the rural poor's families struggle to raise more children than that of the urban poor's families.

The relationship between size of family and socio-cultural variables reveal that the size of the family is positively related with occupation, income and caste of the poor, while there is no relationship with the education of the poor.

Nearly cent per cent poor are married and are leading a marital life, for, only a small proportion of them are widower or divorced.

The poor themselves were married at an early age. However, they do not prefer early marriages for their offsprings. In practice, however, they marry their sons and daughters at an early age.

The direction of migration is from the rural to urban. In urban areas, there are predominantly immigrant households. Most of them belong to different districts of the State of Uttar Pradesh and the proportion of those belonging to Kanpur district is relatively small. The spatial mobility within the city is high. The high prospects of jobs in the city described as the 'pull factor', coupled with a lack of gainful employment of villages dubbed a 'push factor' are strong influences, and when they combine, the propensity to migrate become strong.

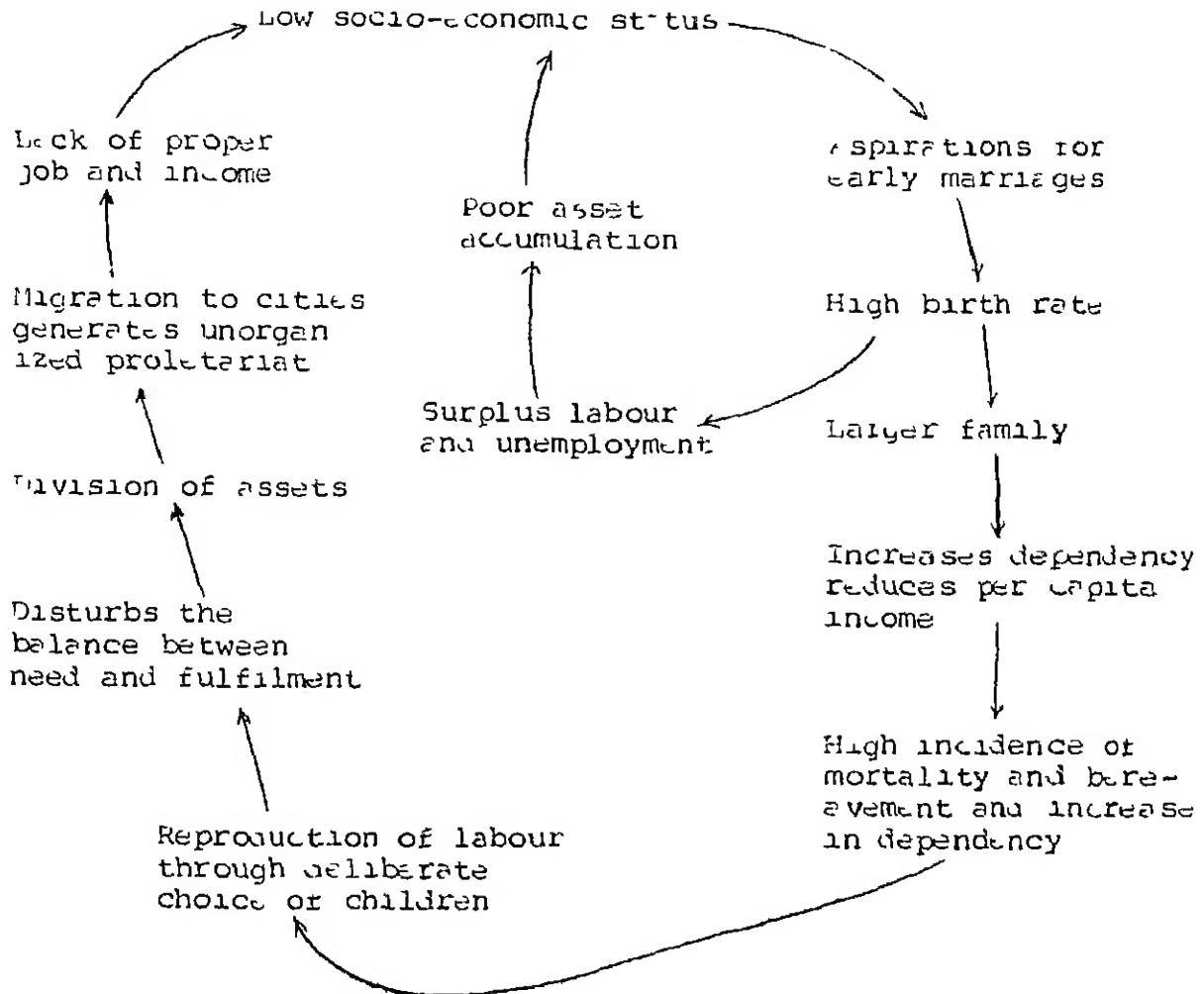
Once the poor migrated to the city, quite a significant proportion of them develop a tendency not to return to their native place and settle in cities. However, an equal proportion of the poor has not yet decided about their future. However, the immigrants maintain their ties with their native places.

The family size and composition have several implications. First, the poor have an effective network of kin obligations. And, the large families contribute to security and to future income of the poor. In this way, large families form a defence mechanism against some aspects of the poverty. But large families have some adverse effects. First, the large families of the poor shows that they are unable to control their family-size. Secondly, it has averse effect over children in formative years, if income earning opportunities are limited and dependency rises. Thirdly, larger the size of the family, more is the labour supply. Fourthly, it affects asset accumulation, even though children assist in earning. Fifthly, kinship obligations hardens the chief earner. Sixthly, chances of mortality is more in large size families. Seventh, the family asset is divided among family members. Finally, more members in the family implies less per capita income.

Furthermore, the migration removes able persons from the villages leaving old, infirm, and children behind and increases unorganized urban proletariat. The population size has adverse affect on supply of various public services, such as education and health. The poverty affects different population groups — the old, the bereaved, etc., which further affect the over all incidence of poverty. To be sure, merely by getting more children, the poverty does not increase. But the kind of life-style the poor are compelled to live leads to the problem of poverty (see Diagram 13.7).

Diagram 13 7

## Implications of Demographic Features



There are two important factors, among others, involved in the consideration of demographic factors in the causation of poverty one is dependency, and the other is population growth

There is a direct relationship between dependency and poverty at the nousehold level because of the direct effects of dependency on real income. In our sample, the poor have, by and large, families wherein dependency ratio is

substantially in excess of the average. The probability of high incidence of mortality among the poor increases the probability of dependency. The poor deliberately choose more children, for the latter add to the family income. So the poor go on reproducing labour as opposed to reproducing capital. In this manner, large family size becomes the natural response to the social environment.

The population growth at the micro-level reduces per capita income, and affects the balance between the needs and their fulfillment, enhances the chances of the division of assets, and adds surplus labour on a family farm.

Inability to control family size is a component of poverty. Large family size has adverse effect on children when the income opportunities are limited. Large family size is linked with labour supply, consumption decision, asset accumulation, inheritance, death of principal household earner, which, in turn, affect poverty.

Rural-urban migration generates an unorganised proletariat. It also has adverse effect on the supply of various public services such as education and health.

The second socio-cultural component of poverty analysed here is the values, interests and activities of the poor.

Some writers assert that the basic values of a society are common to all social classes within society, while others hold that the values differ from class to class. Here we have agreed with Luckhonn who observed. The theories are "both correct, both incomplete, and complementary to one

another" (Kluckhohn et al , 1952 :112). That is to say, those who hold that the basic values of the society are common to all classes are correct, because the poor do share these values with other members of the society. Similarly, those who hold that the values differ from class to class are also correct, because the poor share values unique to themselves, in addition to sharing the general values of the society with others.

Among the common value systems, we tried to find out religiosity among the poor and their egalitarian values. The findings reveal that there is a high degree of religiosity among the poor. They perform rituals, believe in supernatural entity or formally organized religion, and read sacred texts insofar as it is possible. There is a sense of inability among the poor to affect what will happen and lack of conviction that it is within their power to affect their circumstances. Their lives appear to them to be ruled by immutable forces of fate, luck, or chance. They feel that their lives are subject to a set of forces over which they have relatively no control. One of the reasons for the poverty as perceived by the poor is their bad luck. The failure in life is assigned to ill-omen or being unlucky. The poor believe much in the saying "jib neeke din aihain, banat na laihain der" (When good days will dawn, good things will follow forthwith). Pessimism and fatalism about being able to affect one's own situations stems from a feeling of being

victimized by super-ordinate, capricious, and malevolent natural and social forces. They are suspicious towards the nonpoor and powerful groups. There is much envy and hostility towards those who prosper. The poor are of the view that there should be no discrimination between the rich and the poor in various domains of life. They feel being exploited.

The exposure of the poor towards audio-visual mass media is very low, although the urban poor are in somewhat advantageous position than that of the rural poor.

Since the poor live in a different economic and social environment from that in which nonpoor live, the behaviour that they learn, and the habits they develop are bound to differ from the nonpoor. As the poor reach to different realistic situations and psychological crises, their values and goals are different. However, we do not suppose that they do not share the basic assumptions of everyday life of the larger society, but we do recognize that they have undergone a set of experiences that is different from other groups in the community.

Insofar as the class specific values are concerned, they are reflected from the interests and activities of the poor. There are very few leisure-time pursuits for the poor. Their interest is restricted to self, the family, and the neighbourhood. Their primary concern is the problem of survival rather than with the problem of moving up in society. Primarily they do not have leisure, whatever free time they get, they pass it in domestic chores, or doing supplementary

work. For many poor, the rhythm of life is the repetitive activity.

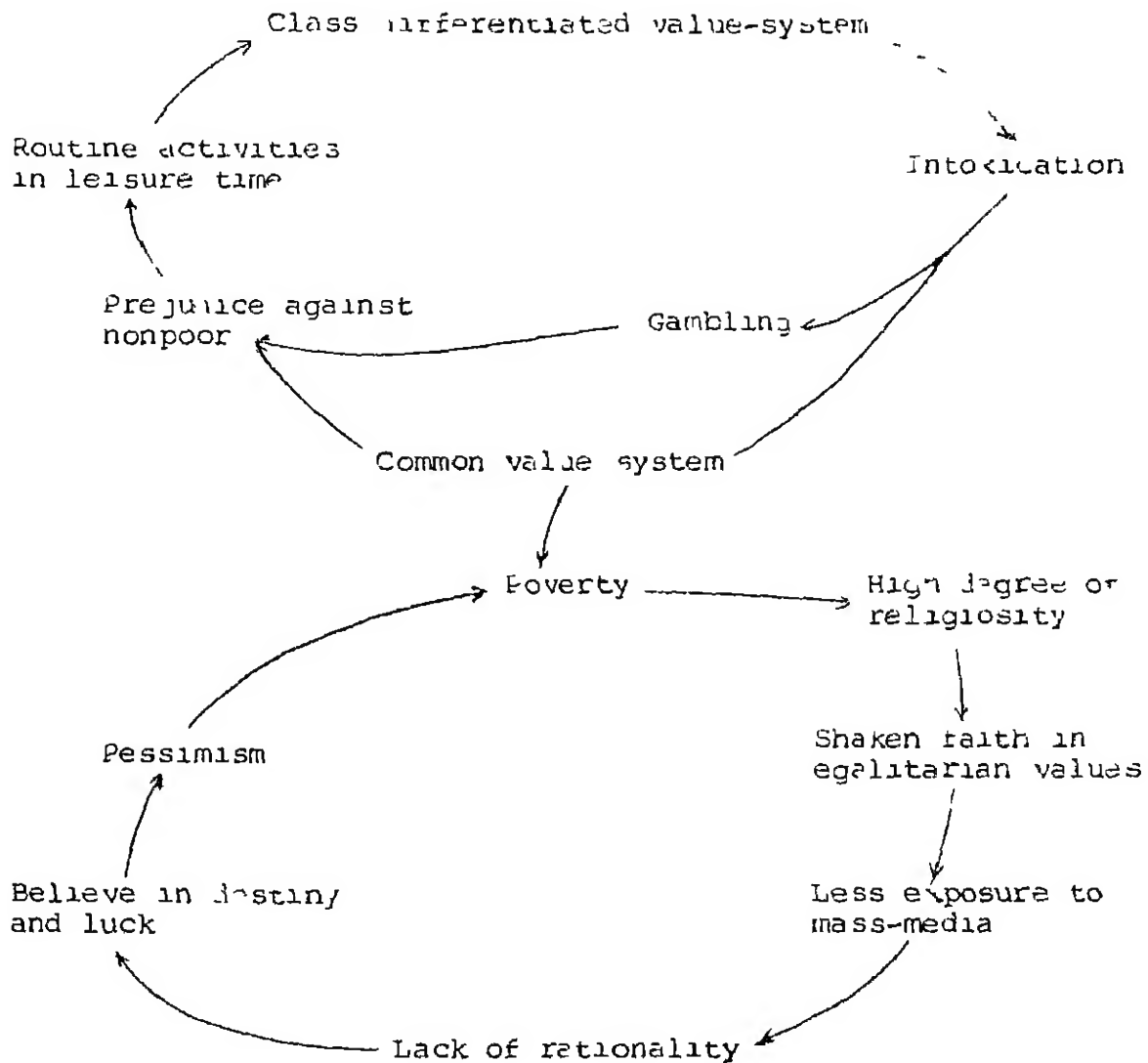
The poor, by and large, use some into icants. Perhaps this may be related to the search for excitement or thrill or it may be a way of forgetting the drudgery of life.

A small proportion of the poor gamble which involves the element of fate. It is here where the poor go to believe that if lucky chances come up, things will go your way, if luck is against you, it's not worth trying. To be sure, the poor do not directly equate it with the supernatural forces of organized religion, but relate it to a concept of 'destiny', or man as a pawn of magical powers. The poor perform semi-magical rituals while playing gamble so that their luck may change. Some such rituals are changing the place where they sit, removing the man sitting nearby him feeling him unlucky or ill-omened, or recalling some deity under the hope that as a result of it they will move from the state of being "unlucky" to that of being "lucky". The element of phantasy plays an important part in this area (see Diagram 13.8).

Various components of poverty interact together to generate these values, interests, and activities. Their illiteracy mars their rationality, and the low socio-economic status creates a sense of insecurity. All this, in turn, develops faith in supernatural forces and magical powers. Consequently, the poor go to link every incidence of their life with religion, destiny, and luck. This leads to pessimism associated with a conception of the ultimate futility of directed effort towards a goal and to the idea that once things

Diagram 13.8

Values, Interests and Activities of the Poor and  
Their Implications



start going your way, relatively independent of your effort, all good things will come. The relative deprivation and failures in life generate prejudice among the poor towards nonpoor. The poor become used to drug, drink and smoking as well as to gambling perhaps to forget monotony of life. Thus,

the interests, activities, and values are likely to play a part in the generation of poverty

The last element of the socio-cultural component of poverty analysed here is the power and politics. The power comes from various sources -- social, economic, and political. Earlier we analysed the economic background of the poor. We believe that the employment, production, income, and assets are all sources of power, since money is one of many kinds of power. The poverty is, thus, one of many kinds of powerlessness. There we saw that the poor are not able to control the means of production and influence the policy decisions that affect their lives. Since much of the economic power depends on the general issue of political control or other aspects of power, we separately analysed the power of the poor in political and social domains of life.

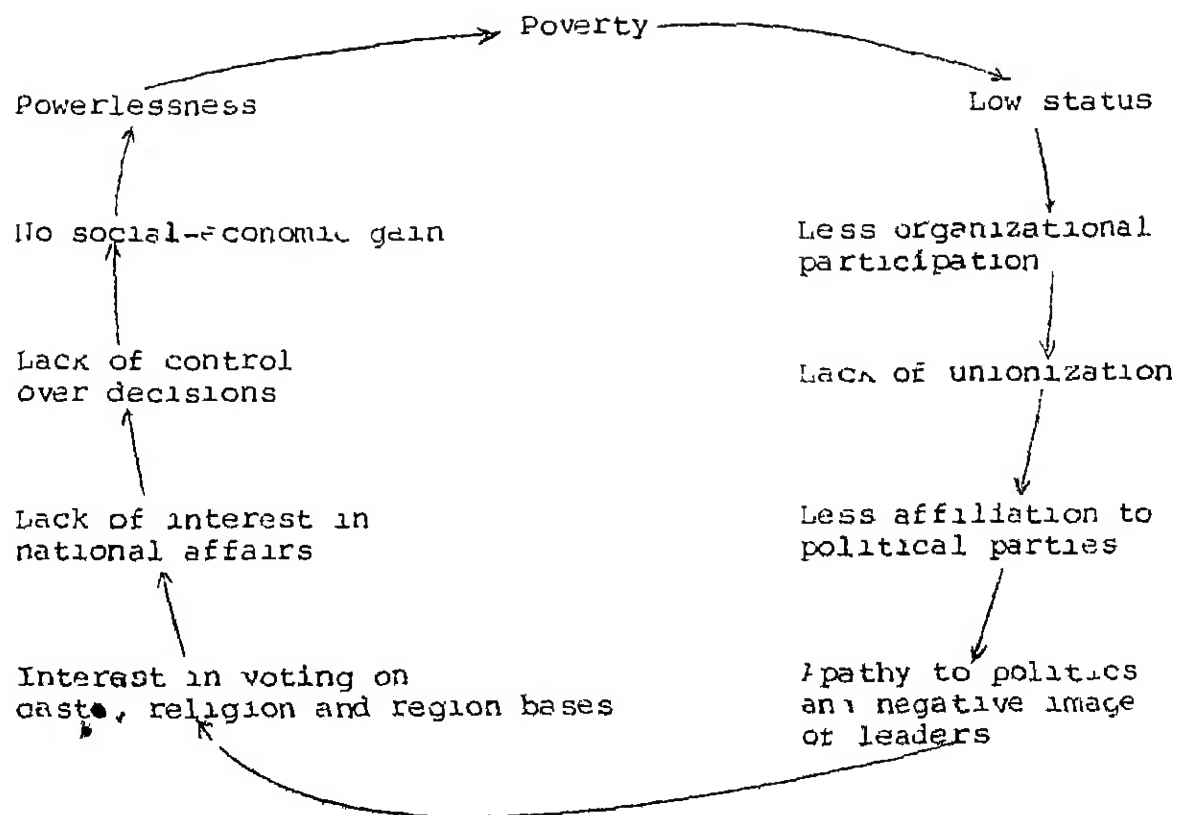
The poor's level of organizational participation is low, the rural poor's organizational participation being lower than that of the urban poor (20.0 vs 38.8 per cent). This indicates the lack of organizational strength to stand to the opposed interest groups. Their contact with political leaders and influentials in the society is also negligible.

The poor did show their attachment with political parties, but that, too, is a passive participation. The poor nurture negative attitudes towards politics. They are rarely interested in national political affairs; their interest being restricted to the self, the family, and the neighbourhood. They smell a major gap between ideal and actual qualities of the political leaders.

The hypothesis that the urban poor are more affiliated to political parties than the rural poor finds support from our data. The poor, by and large, have low organizational participation, less association with political parties, and labour unions. They lack contacts with political and bureaucratic elites. They give less importance to voting during elections but have little or no interest in national affairs. The parochialism prevails in them. All this turns them powerless in the society (see Diagram 13.9).

Diagram 13.9

Poverty and Politics and its Implications in Poor's Life



The powerlessness of the poor generates poverty. The poor do exercise the right of franchise but they do not enjoy any other form of power and are exploited due to their powerlessness.

The rural poor in Kanpur area is generally unorganized, as there is no unionization in villages. This keeps them at a substantial disadvantage in determination of wages and working conditions. In urban areas, there is unionization in the formal sector, but in informal sector there is nothing like that.

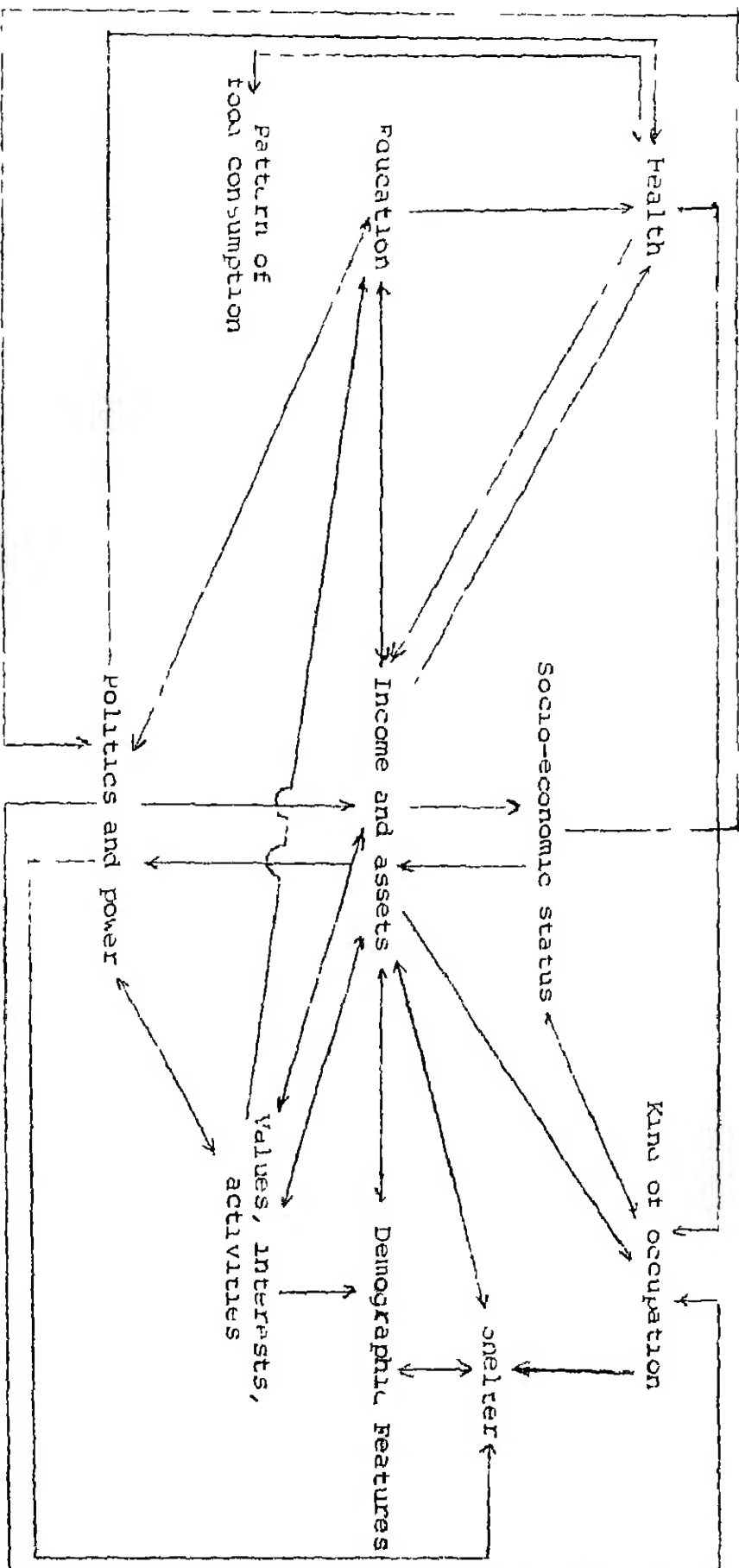
Political power determines the employment production, and income and assets. The poor's inability to control the means of production, as well as to influence the policy decisions affect their lives, and the lack of organizational strength to stand up to opposed interest groups block up their progress.

Low occupation, poor income and assets, inadequate food consumption, insanitary shelter, bad health, low education, large family, powerlessness, and values all combine to generate poverty (see Diagram 13.10).

At this stage we may offer some suggestions based on our findings. The poor in the villages and cities have not been able to make transition from wage labour to other sorts of occupations. This has resulted in an attitude of passivity. It is suggested that ways should be devised to improve the wages of the poor, especially of those who have been displaced from land, and to enable them to get an industrial job by improving their vocational skill and education.

Diagram 13.10

Generation of poverty



It has long been a cherished belief in this country that the poor should overcome poverty themselves. As matters stand today, this has proved impossible for the poor under the modern conditions. Because of historically developed inequality, the modern means do not bring about the equal opportunities for these people. The findings of this analysis have made it clear that after centuries of severe denial of opportunities to the poor — the victims of deprivation — cannot catchup through slogans. Carried to their logical conclusions, it is suggested that it is high time for the implementation of a comprehensive national programme in favour of currently underprivileged sections of the society.

Among the poor, there are many sub-groups, the members of which do not display similar consequences of poverty. It is suggested that the programmes for poor's improvement must be chalked out according to the types of poor.

The poverty is not so much the result of some imperfection in the individual behaviour pattern rather than to the stresses that are generated by a particular poverty situation. The motivation of the poor is to be found in terms of the opportunity and reward structure of the community. So there is less need of changing the individuals and need more of linking the poor with the cues and rewards of larger community, or combating unemployment stress by changing regulation of job structure of the society, and of overcoming the stresses and unpredictability brought about by a scarcity of economic resources.

The poor's life is organized but that organization is on a different basis. Their life is full of tensions and anxieties of poverty situations and the life-style that develops is the product of these surroundings.

There are two levels of understanding the problems of poverty: macro and micro. At the macro-level, broad structural relationships which describe the evolution of the society as a whole need be understood. But this cannot be adequately understood in terms of its characteristic, causation, and effects without understanding the micro-level phenomena with which they interact. At the same time, micro-level processes are conditioned by macro-level changes, implying that micro-level analysis alone cannot capture the process of poverty generation. It is our suggestion that a satisfactory model be developed through the design of an intermediate level of analysis combining both macro- and micro-components.

Our analysis further suggests that a more detailed study of the components of poverty is required, if coherent policies for its elimination are to be devised.

Given the conceptualization of poverty which we have developed, the main implication is that no single instrument will suffice. To operate on an interrelated set of policies is required. It is not denied that action in a single field cannot lead to significant gains. What is argued here is that on the whole the generation of poverty is such as to limit the effectiveness of any single policy applied in

isolation. In emphasizing on any one programme, we have to consider what other complementary policies are required.

With an adequate conceptualization of poverty, and an understanding of the relationships through which it is generated, an appropriate broad strategy could be devised and implemented.

Our analysis has focussed <sup>on</sup> nine components of the vector of poverty. But these areas do not exhaust the list. The analysis could certainly be extended into areas not covered here.

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## APPENDIX

### CONFIDENTIAL

(Purely for Academic Purposes)

#### Interview Schedule

S1 No

CODE 10

STRUCTURAL DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY IN INDIA A RURAL-URBAN  
COMPARISON OF COMPONENTS, CAUSATION, AND CONSEQUENCES OF  
POVERTY

#### Face Sheet

Name of interviewee ----- Date of interview -----  
Time taken for interview ----- Village/Slum -----

#### I

#### ECONOMIC COMPONENTS

##### 1. Occupation

- 1 What is your main occupation?
- 2 Do you do any other work besides the one you have just stated in order to have additional income?
- 3 What is the nature of your occupation?  
1 Permanent 2 Dailywage 3 Seasonal 4 Temporary  
5 Cannot say
- 4 Since how long have you been engaged in the present occupation? ----- years
- 5 What was your occupation before you switched over to present job?
- 6 What made you to change your former occupation?  
1. Hard working ----- 2. Less income ----- 3. Other reason ----- 4 No change -----
- 7 How long did you take in finding out the present job after coming to the city?  
1 Immediately ----- 2 within six months -----  
3 Over six months ----- 4 Not applicable -----
8. How did you manage to get the job you are engaged in?  
1. Through public agency ----- 2 On your own -----  
3 Relatives and acquaintances ----- 4. Bribe -----
9. What prompted you to go in for the present occupation?  
1 No source or income -----  
2. Equal importance to every type of job -----  
3 Pressurized by others to do this work -----  
4 Other reason -----

10. Why do you not like the job you are engaged in?  
 1 Hard working ----- 2. Less income -----  
 3 Temporary job . 4 Satisfied -----
- 11 How many persons are unemployed in your family? -----
- 12 Why are they unemployed?  
 1. No job available ----- 2 They are irresponsible and  
 worthless fellows --- - 3. They are deviant -----  
 4. Other reason -----
13. Are you in favour of women working outside?  
 1 Yes ----- 2, No -----
14. How many female member of your family are in employment?  
 1 Wife ----- 2 Daughter ----- 3 Sister -----  
 4 Other (specify) -----
15. Finally, I would like to know the occupation of your  
 father -----

## 2 Income and Assets

- 16 What is your approximate monthly income from all sources?  
 1. Rs 100-and-less --- - 2 Rs. 100-200 -----  
 3 Rs 200-300 ----- 4. Rs 300-400 -----  
 5 Rs. 400-500 ----- 6 Rs. 500-and-above -----
- 17 I would like to know the sources from which you derive  
 the income? -----
18. What are the main reason for your meagre income?  
 1. Limited source of income ----- 2 Insufficient  
 earning ----- 3. Large number of dependents -----  
 4. Low wages ----- 5 Unemployment ----- 6 Cannot say ----
19. Is there any other earning member in your family besides  
 you?

Relationship	Sex	Age	Marital status	Education	Income
--------------	-----	-----	-------------------	-----------	--------

20. How many persons depend on your earning (specify number  
 of dependents)?
21. Do you own land? Yes, ----- bighas; No -----
- 22 What utensils do you have in your house?  

Household utensils	Use	Preserve
1. Earthen		
2. High cost metallic		
3. Low cost metallic		
23. Do you have the following household articles?  
 1. Plank/cots ----- 2. Cycle ----- 3. Transistor -----  
 4. Chair ----- 5 None -----
24. Which domestic animals are there in your house?  
 1 Cow ----- 2. Buffalo ----- 3. Pig ----- 4. Goat -----  
 5 Hens ----- 6. Other -----
25. How much do you save per month after meeting out all your  
 expenses?  
 1. Rs. 20-and-less ----- 2. Rs. 21-40 -----  
 3 Rs 41-60 ----- 4. Rs. 61-80 -----  
 5. Rs 81-and-above ----- 6. No saving -----

- 26 Where do you invest your savings?  
 1 Provident Fund ----- 2 Bank ----- 3 Insurance  
 Policy ----- 4. Post-office ----- 5 Kept in House -----  
 6 Reliable neighbour ----- 7 No saving -----
- 27 Have you incurred debt?  
 1 Yes ----- 2 No -----
- 28 If yes, what was the purpose for borrowing?  
 1 Domestic need ----- 2 Marriage ----- 3 Economic  
 activity ----- 4 Medical expense ----- 5 House  
 construction ----- 6 Litigation ----- 7, Do not  
 take loan -----
- 29 What are the sources for raising loans?  
 1 Relatives ----- 2. Friends ----- 3 Money lender ---  
 4. Shopkeeper ----- 5 Employers ----- 6 Neighbours  
 ----- 7. Banks ----- 8 Co-operative ----- 9 No  
 debt -----
- 30 In case you need money for some urgent work, where from  
 do you arrange it?  
 1. Friends ----- 2. Relatives ----- 3 Money lender  
 ----- 4 Provident fund ----- 5. Do not borrow ---
- 31 How do you repay your loans?  
 1 Selling the jewellery and dead property -----  
 2 Doing some job ----- 3 Other -----
- 32 Have you ever been benefited by 1 Private charity -----  
 2 Public charity ----- 3 None -----

## II

## NEED COMPONENT

3 Food, Clothing and Other Necessities

- 33 Let me know your monthly expenditure on the following  
 household items

<u>Items</u>	<u>Expenditure (Approximate) in Rs.</u>
1 Food	-----
2 Clothing	-----
3 Postage	-----
4. Travel	-----
5 Entertainment	-----
6 Addiction	-----

- 34 Would you tell me about your daily food consumption?

<u>Items</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Items</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
1 Wheat	-----	7 Edible oil	-----
2 Rice	-----	8. Sugar/molasses	-----
3. Rough cereals	-----	9. Meat/fish	-----
4 Vegetable	-----	10. Egg	-----
5 Pulses	-----		
6. Milk	-----		

35. Why do you take this type of food?  
 1 Cannot afford for other things ----- 2. Cheaper -----  
 3. Easily available ----- 4. Food-habit -----

4 The Shelter

- 36 The rooms you occupy are used for  
 1 Sleeping only ----- 2 Kitchen only -----  
 3 Store only ----- 4 Dinning only -----  
 5 For all purposes -----
- 37 Is there provision of following in your house?  
 1 Ventilation ----- 2 Sun light -----
- 38 Is there provision of following essential amenities in your house?  
 1 Bath-room ----- 2 Kitchen ----- 3 Latrine -----  
 4 Water-supply ----- 5 Electricity -----
- 39 What place do you use as lavatory?  
 1 Own latrine ----- 2 Open space ----- 3 Municipality  
 latrine ----- 4 Shared latrine -----
- 40 How do you manage to get drinking water?  
 1 Wells ----- 2 Public water tap ----- 3 Share with  
 others ----- 4 Ponds ----- 5 Own water tap -----
- 41 What is the arrangement of lighting in your house?  
 1 Electricity ----- 2 kerosene lamp -----
- 42 In what season your house is pleasant and troublesome?
- |        | <u>Pleasant</u> | <u>Troublesome</u> |
|--------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Winter | -----           | -----              |
| Summer | -----           | -----              |
| Rainy  | -----           | -----              |
- 43 Why do you reside in this house?  
 1 Own house ----- 2 Low rent ----- 3 Proximity to  
 work place ----- 4 Nearness to relatives -----  
 5 Compulsions -----
- 44 Have you decorated your house with  
 1 Furniture ----- 2 Calendars ----- 3 Curtains -----  
 4 Other things ----- 5 Not decorated -----
- 45 What obstructs you from keeping your house in proper order?  
 1 Lack of money ----- 2 Lack of time ----- 3 Not  
 interested ----- 4 It is in proper order -----
- 46 What are the main obstacles in owning a house?  
 1 Lack of money ----- 2 Inability to raise loan -----  
 3 Indifference of authority -----
- 47 Take it that government provides you sufficient help to  
 build a house, how would you manage to repay the amount?  
 1 Instalments ----- 2 You will hire your house -----  
 3 Not desirous to own a house ----- 4 Other way -----
- 48 What is your monthly expenditure on housing? -----
- 49 What is your status regarding the ownership of house?  
 1 Own house ----- 2 Rented house ----- 3 Shared  
 accommodation ----- 4 Other -----
50. What kind of house do you live in?  
 1 Mud houses ----- 2 Hut ----- 3 Mud and bricks -----  
 4 Brick house -----
51. How many rooms are there in the house you live in?  
 1 Single roomed tenement ----- 2 Single room but  
 partitioned ----- 3 Two-rooms ----- 4 Three-rooms -----

- 52 Who else live with you in your house?  
 1 Wife and children ----- 2 Siblings ----- 3 Parents -----  
 ----- 4 In-laws ----- 5 Friends ----- 6 Relatives -- --  
 7. Covillagers ----- 8 Fellow workers --- -

### III

#### RESOURCE COMPONENT

#### 5 Health and Sanitation

- 53 Which type of medicine you prefer most?  
 1. Allopathic ----- 2 Herbal - --- 3 Ayurvedic -----  
 4 Homeopathic -----
- 54 Where do you go for medical treatment?  
 1 Govt. hospital ----- 2 Private practitioner -----  
 3 Quacks ----- 4. Own medicine --- - 5 Magician/  
 ojha -----
- 55 What are the main difficulties in getting proper treatment?  
 1 Lack of money -- -- 2 Lack of public hospital -----  
 3 Public hospitals do not care for the poor -----  
 4. Private physicians are costly -----  
 5 Medicines are costly -----
- 56 Are you satisfied with the treatment you receive from  
 various agencies?  
 Yes ----- No -----
- 57 Do you give following items to sick in your family?  
 Milk ----- Tonic ----- Cannot afford ----
- 58 Are you aware of any epidemic or a contagious disease in  
 your locality?  
 Yes ----- No -----
- 59 Do you buy the edible from hawkers who sell their things  
 open?  
 Yes ----- No -----
- 60 Does any health department official visit your locality?  
 1 Frequently ----- 2 Sometimes ----- 3 Almost never -----
- 61 Whether following medicines are sprayed in your locality?  
 1. D D T ----- 2. Phinol ----- 3 Gamaxene -----  
 4. None -----
- 62 Is there provision of following things in your locality?  
 1. Sewage ----- 2. Public place ----- 3. Passage ways  
 for stagnant water -----
63. What is your monthly expenditure on medicines? -----

#### 6. Education

64. Why could you not get further education?  
 1 Poor economic condition -----  
 2. Lone man to take care of the family -----  
 3. Lack of interest -----  
 4. No school near the residence -----  
 5 Death, divorce, desertion of parents -----
- 65 What is/was the education of your parents?  
 1. Father ----- 2 Mother -----

- 66 What is the education of your wife -----  
 67 Who is going to school in your family currently?  
 1 Sons -- -- 2. Daughters ----- 3 Both -----  
 4 Brother ----- 5. Sister ----- 6 Other -----  
 68 What type of education have you arranged for your children?  
 1 Science ----- 2 Vocational ----- 3 Arts --- -  
 4 Commerce -- -- 5 No choice -----  
 69 Why are you educating your children?  
 1 To get good jobs ----- 2 To get higher social status  
 ----- 3 To get attractive work ----- 4. Other reason  
 ----- 5 Do not send for schooling -----  
 70 What are the difficulties in educating the children?  
 1 Financial hardship ----- 2 Lack of educational  
 institutions ----- 3. Lack of interest in studies -----  
 4 No school-going child -----  
 71 What is the highest level of education your children have  
 achieved?  
 1 Son ----- 2 Daughter -----  
 72 What is your opinion for higher studies of women?  
 1. It is wastage of money ----- 2 Boys are teasing them  
 ----- 3 They should help in domestic works -----  
 4 Other reason ----- 5 They should go for higher  
 studies -----  
 73 What is the status of educated persons in your family/  
 1 Unemployed - - - 2 Employed --- - 3 No educated  
 member -----  
 74. Do the educated member help the family?  
 Yes ----- No -----  
 75 Do you feel that teachers pay sufficient attention to  
 your children?  
 Yes ----- No -----  
 76. What is your monthly expenditure on the schooling of  
 children?

## IV

## SOCIO-CULTURAL COMPONENT

7 Demographic Features

- 77 Nature of family  
 1 Joint ----- 2 Nuclear -----  
 78 Now I would like to know about household members (living  
 under the same roof)
- |    | Relationship with<br>Householder | Age | Sex | Marital<br>status | Education |
|----|----------------------------------|-----|-----|-------------------|-----------|
| 1. | ---                              | --- | --- | ---               | ---       |
| 2. | ---                              | --- | --- | ---               | ---       |
| 3. | ---                              | --- | --- | ---               | ---       |
| 4. | ---                              | --- | --- | ---               | ---       |
| 5. | ---                              | --- | --- | ---               | ---       |
- 79 Which type of family you prefer most?  
 1 Nuclear ----- 2 Joint -----

- 80 What is your view about the joint family?  
 1 Good place to live ( )  
 2 Protection during calamity ( )  
 3 Exploitation by the head or household ( )  
 4 Provides economic support ( )
- 81 Is it your  
 1 First marriage ( ) 2 Second marriage ( )  
 3 Third marriage ( )
- 82 What was your age at marriage?  
 1 15 and less ( ) 2 15-18 years ( ) 3 Above 18 years ( ) 4 Unmarried ( )
- 83 At what age do you think the marriage should take place  
Sex/Age      15 years-and-less      15-18 years  
 Boys  
 Girls
- 84 At what age did you marry your children?  
Sex/Age      15 years-and-less      15-18 years      No response  
 Sons  
 Daughters
- 85 How much money have you spent/or plan to spend on marriage?  
 -----
- 86 What is the state of dowry in the marriage?  
 1 Give the dowry ( ) 2. Take the dowry ( )  
 3 No dowry ( ) 4. Other remark ( )
- 87 How do you view dowry system?  
 1 Social evil ( ) 2 A necessity ( ) 3 Means of support ( ) 4 Other remark ( )
- 88 Whom are the widows remarried in your community?  
 1 Outside kith and kin ( ) 2. Family members ( )  
 3 Relatives ( ) 4. Widow remarriage is not allowed ( )
- 89 Is there any divorce/desertion in your family?  
 1 Yourself ( ) 2 Son ( ) 3 Daughter ( )  
 4. Parent ( ) 5 Brother ( ) 6 Sister ( )  
 7. Other ( ) 8. None ( )
- 90 What are the reasons for divorce/desertion in your family?  
 1 Mutual tension ( ) 2. Bad character ( )  
 3 Dowry ( ) 4 No divorce ( )
- 91 How do you effect divorce?  
 1 Court ----- 2 Caste panchayat ----- 3. Living separately ----- 4 Other remark -----
92. Where is your birth place?  
 1. Village/slum ----- 2. District ----- 3. State -----
- 93 Would you let me know about the details of your first and subsequent migration upto this city?
- | <u>Frequency</u> | <u>First</u> | <u>Second</u> | <u>Third</u> | <u>Fourth</u> |
|------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <u>Year</u>      | <u>---</u>   | <u>---</u>    | <u>---</u>   | <u>---</u>    |
- 94 In the same way, I am also interested to know about your first and subsequent migration within the city.
- | <u>Frequency</u> | <u>First</u> | <u>Second</u> | <u>Third</u> | <u>Fourth</u> |
|------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <u>Year</u>      | <u>---</u>   | <u>---</u>    | <u>---</u>   | <u>---</u>    |

- 95 Why did you select this city?  
 1 Having relatives and friends ( ) 2 Familiarity with local language ( ) 3 Fearness from the native place ( ) 4 Better prospects of employment ( ) 5 Migration ( )
- 96 What was the reason that you left your native place?  
 1 Search of employment ( ) 2 No enough land ( ) 3 Meagre income ( ) 4 Inebriety ( ) 5 Family differences ( ) 6 Did not migrate ( )
- 97 Do you intend to settle in this city?  
 1. Permanently ----- 2. Temporarily ----- 3. Not decided -----
- 98 How often do you visit your native place  
 1 No visit --- 2 Frequently ----- 3 Sometimes -----
- 99 How do you feel about your level of living in this city as compared to that in your native place?  
 1 Better ----- 2. Worse ----- 3 No change -----

### 8 Values, Interests and Activities

- 100 Do you believe in  
 1 God ----- 2 Bhoot/preet/zin/brahma/ghost -----
- 101 Who is your family deity? -----
- 102 Do you believe in rebirth?  
 Yes ----- No -----
- 103 Please give the following informations  
 1 Do you keep fast? Yes/No  
 2 Do you go to pilgrimages? Yes/No  
 3 Do you give alms? Yes/No
104. Does your family observe taboos such as  
 1 Food Yes/No  
 2 Indiction Yes/No
- 105 Do you think births and deaths are completely governed by the grace or god?  
 Yes ----- No -----
- 106 Which of the religious books do you often read?  
 1 Ram charit manas ( ) 2 Geeta ( ) 3 Quran ( )  
 4 Other scripts ( ) 5. Do not read ( )
- 107 Do you feel that poverty is a matter of fate? Yes/No
- 108 Poor have such habits that they cannot prosper Do you agree with? Yes/No
- 109 In your opinion what is the main cause of poverty  
 1 Bad luck ( ) 2 Poor earning ( ) 3 Illiteracy and ignorance ( ) 4 No affiliation with unions and political parties ( ) 5. Idleness ( ) 6 Unemployment ( ) 7. Other reason ( )
110. I would like to ascertain your opinion on following statements
- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| 1. The poor are less intelligent by birth  | Yes/No |
| 2. The poor are wicked by nature   | Yes/No |
| 3. The poor are quarrelsome  | Yes/No |
| 4. The poor are criminals  | Yes/No |
| 5. The same medical treatment should be meted out to both the master and the servant | Yes/No |

6. There should be no discrimination in matters of food among the rich and poor 2-3/0
7. The government should close down such educational institutions where only rich children study Yes/No
8. In schools, there should be parity in matters of food among the rich and the poor children Yes/No
9. Rich children should not play with the poor children Yes/No
111. Do you feel that
1. The sons of the poor get job opportunities similar to the son of the rich Yes/No
  2. Public services are equally available to both the rich and the poor Yes/No
112. Man's present is determined by the past Yes/No
113. One's future is in his own hand Yes/No
114. When you come to know about any new inventions, how do you react?
1. Want to adopt immediately ( )
  2. Only there is curiosity ( )
  3. After others have tested ( )
  4. Do not want to adopt ( )
  5. Cannot say ( )
115. Suppose that you come to know any new thing which you can afford to have, when do you normally have it?
1. As early as possible ( )
  2. Wait and see ( )
  3. After others have used ( )
  4. Cannot say ( )
116. How do you think the death of a person?
1. Death is god ordained Yes/No
  2. Man can fight against the death by proper treatment Yes/No
  3. Any kind of treatment cannot postpone the death Yes/No
117. How do you normally utilize your leisure time?
- |                     |                            |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Reading -----       | Entertainment -----        |
| Shopping -----      | Domestic works -----       |
| Gossip -----        | Religious activities ----- |
| Friend circle ----- | Any other -----            |
118. How often do you go to movies?
1. Frequently ( )
  2. Sometimes ( )
  3. Never (or almost never) ( )
119. How often do you listen to the radio?
1. Everyday ( )
  2. Twice or thrice a week ( )
  3. Sometimes/seldom ( )
  4. Do not listen ( )
120. How often do you read newspapers?
- Daily - ----; Several days in a week -----, Sometimes in a week -----; Seldom -----, Never -----; Cannot read -----
121. How often do you use intoxicants?
- Frequently -----, Sometimes -----; Never -----
122. What are you addicted to?
1. ----- 2. ----- 3. -----
123. How frequently do you play gambling?
- Frequently -----; Sometimes -----; Never -----

9. Politics and Power

- 124 Are you a member of any organization like  
co-operative, club, etc? (specify) Yes/No
- 125 How frequently do you attend the meetings of organization  
Frequently -----, sometimes - ---, never -----
- 126 What is membership fee?  
1 Monthly -- -- 2 Yearly ----- 3 Life-time -----  
4 No fee -
- 127 Do you belong to any labour union  
Yes ----- No -----
- 128 Are you associated with any local committees  
which deal with the problems of your locality? Yes/No
- 129 Have you ever talked to/written to any authority in connection  
with the problems of your locality?  
1 Political authority Yes/No  
2 Bureaucratic authority Yes/No
- 130 Do you think the present government is  
1. Suitable for the country ( ) 2 Unsuitable for the  
country ( ) 3 Cannot say ( )
- 131 Of which political party's ideology comes closest to your  
own political views?  
1 Janta party ( ) 2 Congress(I) ( ) 3 Bhartiya  
Janata party ( ) 4 Socialist party ( ) 5 Communist  
party ( ) 6 Other ( ) 7 None ( )
- 132 Which political party you are associated with?  
1 Janata party ( ) 2 Congress(I) ( ) 3 Bhartiya  
Janata party ( ) 4 Socialist party ( ) 5 Communist  
party ( ) 6 Other party ( ) 7 None ( )
133. How do you help the political party, you are associated  
with?  
1 As a party member ( ) 2 Office bearer ( )  
3 Sympathiser ( ) 4. Campaigner ( ) 5. Social  
contributor ( ) 6. No help ( )
- 134 What is your opinion about politics?  
1 A game of tricks and dishonesty ( ) 2 Service to the  
society ( ) 3. It begets prestige ( ) 4 It is below  
dignity ( ) 5 Political life is unstable ( )  
6 Good source of earning money ( ) 7. Other remark ( )
- 135 Where would you place your interest in national political  
affairs?  
1 Very interested ( ) 2. Interested ( )  
3. Slightly interested ( ) 4. Not at all interested ( )
- 136 Do you use your franchise during elections? Yes/No
- 137 What should be the quality of a political leader?  
1 Should be helpful ( ) 2. Should be creative ( )  
3. Should be intelligent ( ) 4. Should be influential  
( ) 5 Cannot say ( )
- 138 What type of political leaders do you generally report  
these days?  
1. Helpful and active ( ) 2. Selfish and inactive ( )  
3. Antisocial ( ) 4. Unhelpful ( )
139. Take it that you have to elect a leader, what factor would  
determine your choice?

- 1 High socio-economic status ( ) 2 Belongs to your own caste ( ) 3. Orator and honest ( ) 4 Belongs to your religion ( ) 5 Belongs to same locality ( )  
6 Manipulator ( )
- 140 What type of government you like most?  
1 Which ensures law and order ( ) 2 Democratic ( )  
3 Which ensures free speech and utter ( ) 4. Authoritarian ( )

/

## IDENTIFYING DATA

- 141 Age  
1. 20-30 yrs ( ) 2 30-40 yrs ( ) 3 40-50 yrs ( )  
4. 50-60 yrs. ( ) 5 60-and-above ( )
- 142 Caste  
1 Brahmin ( ) 2. Kshatriya ( ) 3 Vaishya ( )  
4 Intermediary caste (specify) ----- 5 Schedule Caste (specify) -----  
6 Backward Caste (specify) -----  
7 Non-caste ( )
- 143 Religion  
1 Hindu ( ) 2 Muslim ( )
- 144 Marital status  
1 Married ( ) 2. Unmarried ( ) 3. Widow ( )  
4 Divorced ( )
- 145 Education  
1. Illiterate ( ) 2. Bare literate ( ) 3. Primary ( )  
4 Middle ( ) 5 High School ( ) 6 Intermediate ( )  
7. Graduate ( ) 8 Technical ( )

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